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AN ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE AND CUSTOMS OF THE LENGUA INDIANS OF THE PARAGUAYAN CHACO, WITH ADVENTURES AND EXPERIENCES DURING TWENTY YEARS' PIONEERING AND EXPLORATION AMONGST THEM

BY

W. BARBROOKE GRUBB

"COMISARIO GENERAL DEL CHACO Y PACIFICADOR DE LOS INDIOS"
PIONEER & EXPLORER OF THE CHACO

EDITED BY

H. T. MORREY JONES, M.A. (Oxon)

WITH 30 ILLUSTRATIONS & A MAP

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TO

HIM WHO GAVE

ME MY MARCHING ORDERS

THE RIGHT REV. WAITE H. STIRLING, D.D.,

First Bishop of the Falkland Isles,

IN REMEMBRANCE OF WORDS OF CHEER, SOUND ADVICE,

AND WELCOME VISITS WHEN ALONE

IN THE WILDS

PREFACE

It is prophesied that during the next decade the attention of the world will be turned to South America as markedly as it has been directed to the Far East in this. There are undoubtedly substantial grounds for such a forecast. The natural wealth of the Continent is unquestioned, and rapid developments have taken place of recent years. But with few exceptions—in particular, that of the linking of the east and west coasts by the completion of the Trans-Andine Railway—these developments are confined to the coast-line of the Continent. Though some of its mighty rivers are navigable for thousands of miles, yet much of the interior is still shrouded in mystery Exploring expeditions have had to encounter impassable and malarial swamps, impenetrable forests, unnavigable rivers, and hostile tribes of Indians, and have for the most part ended in disaster

Strange rumours are still current as to the nature and inhabitants of the huge interior region known as the Chaco, which is the subject of this volume. Its name has been interpreted as meaning "a hiding-place," which, though a false etymology, is nevertheless a true description of this unknown land.

In the year 1889 the Church of England South American Missionary Society began a work in the Paraguayan Chaco, and in the following pages the pioneer missionary and explorer recounts his experiences and adventures, and gives the results of studies and researches covering a period of twenty years, during which he lived in the heart of the Indian fastnesses among the tribe of the Lenguas. Barbrooke Grubb may be a name little known at home, but in South America he is

recognized as the greatest living authority on the Indians of the Chaco.

During his last furlough he supplied me with a fund of information which I wrote down from his dictation, and, guided by the knowledge which I had myself gained during a few years in the Chaco, I have ventured to edit the present volume.

The following narrative deals almost exclusively with the early years of Grubb's life among the Lenguas. His extraordinary adventures and perilous experiences are fully described, and will, I think, engage the attention of every reader. In particular, the remarkable narrative of the attempt upon his life, when he was left for dead, and narrowly escaped being buried alive; and all the incidents of his subsequent rescue show in a strange way the workings of the Indian mind and character, as well as Grubb's courage and powers of endurance. His recovery from his wound under such trying circumstances was considered so extraordinary that Dr. O'Connor, the eminent surgeon of the Buenos Aires British Hospital, who operated on him, gave him a letter of introduction to Sir Frederick Treves, saying, " Put your surgical ear to his chest." The letter, however, was never presented, as Grubb returned immediately to the Chaco.

The full account here given of primitive life and customs, Indian mythology, superstitions, and witchcraft, with all their attendant barbarities, will convey some idea of the difficulties encountered in the attempt to form such a people into a civilized community and a Christian Church. Frequent reference is made in the following pages to the most important of the older writings on the Chaco—" An Account of the Abiponi Indians," by Dobrizhoffer, a Jesuit Father—whose descriptions, although written one hundred and fifty years ago, correspond closely with observations made in the present day, a remarkable proof of the stagnant condition of the Chaco tribes and of the persistence of their customs and deep-seated superstitions.

The opening up of a large and practically unknown country, which has been an indirect result of the Mission, will seem important to those who watch with serious interest the gradual

reclamation of the earth's waste places. To-day it is safe for the white man to traverse some two hundred miles in a direct course west of the River Paraguay, over roads cut by the missionaries and other large areas within the Mission sphere; whereas formerly men who had acquired lands within the Chaco scarcely dared even to inspect them, and carefully avoided all footmarks or other signs of Indians. Where formerly ranchers hesitated to stock their land, for fear of Indian raids, thousands of cattle may be found to-day in well-fenced paddocks, tended by Indians who have been trained in the Mission and taught many useful crafts. The Roman Catholic Government of Paraguay has fully recognized the value of the work of this Protestant Mission, and has conferred on the author of this volume the title of "Pacificator of the Indians." It has also accepted the missionaries' geographical notes as the basis of an official map of the region.

The reader who is in sympathy with the definite work of Christian Missions will see the practical methods which have been adopted in breaking down old beliefs and witchcraft, and the ways in which medical work and certain branches of education and training have been steps to the reception of Christianity; but another volume by the same author which is in preparation will describe more fully the actual spiritual development of the Lenguas.

Not the least formidable task in the building up of these primitive people has been the study and reduction to writing of their very difficult language, a task so laborious that it was eight years before any systematic work could be undertaken. Mr. R. J. Hunt has been almost entirely responsible for the compiling of a large dictionary and for all the translation work, having devoted fifteen years to the study of the peculiar and comprehensive language of the Lenguas, and to him I am indebted for the account of it which appears in Appendix III. With these valuable aids to teaching, the spiritual development has been very marked during the last decade. The work has been under the superintendence of the Rev. P. R. Turner in the field and of the two first Bishops of the Falkland Isles as visitors.

PREFACE

Special mention should be made of Mr. Andrew Pride, who has worked side by side with the author for seventeen years, and has taken an important part in all that fell to the lot of a pioneer. To him I am indebted for most of the photographs which illustrate this volume, and to the Royal Anthropological Society for the small drawings.

Professor Graham Kerr and Dr. W. E. Agar, both of Glasgow University, who spent long periods at or near the Mission station engaged in scientific research, have most kindly allowed me to cull from their writings the passages on the flora and fauna of the Chaco which appear in Appendix II.

My warmest thanks are due to others who have aided me in editing this work, especially to my old college friend, Mr. W. St. David Jenkins, for his valuable help in revising the manuscript, and to the Librarian of the British Museum for the opportunities afforded of consulting books of reference.

The author's profits from the sale of this volume will be devoted to the support of the Society's Mission, in which it is my earnest hope that many readers may come to take a deep interest.

H. T. MORREY JONES

December, 1910

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AN UNKNOWN PEOPLE IN AN UNKNOWN LAND

CHAPTER I

RUMOURS

The countries lying on the opposite banks of the great River Paraguay for some fourteen hundred miles of its course, running between the regions of Paraguay proper on the east and the Chaco on the west, present a contrast which it would be difficult to equal anywhere in the world.

At night on the Chaco bank may be seen the half-naked forms of Indians as they move to and fro in the flickering light of their camp-fires which but dimly illuminate their rude shelters, standing in a clearing in the dark forest which forms a background. The painted faces and plumed heads of these savages enhance the weirdness of the scene. The sounds which greet the ear are equally barbarous. A low droning chant may be heard, accompanied by the rattle of gourds, and broken only too often by a shrill cry of pain when a child, perhaps, has been cruelly murdered, and the women's voices are raised in lamentation. Yet from this bank at the same moment may be plainly heard the loud shriek of the siren of a large Brazilian passenger steamer as she nears the port of a Paraguayan town just across the river, with the bright rays of her electric light streaming from her saloons and decks, and the twinkling lights of the town dotted along the opposite bank easily distinguishable in the distance.

For hundreds of miles to the west reaching to Bolivia, to

the north as far as Brazil, and southwards to the settled provinces of the Argentine Republic, there stretches a vast region almost wholly given over to barbarism. As it was when Juan de Solis sailed up the River Plate four centuries ago, so it was when I first entered the land of this unknown people, and so it is in great part to this very day. Dreadful crimes are daily enacted in this hidden land of the Chaco, atrocities which are seldom brought to the knowledge of those who are near neighbours.

On the eastern bank of the River Paraguay we find large modern cities with a civilization, in many cases, far in advance of some of our European towns. It is strange indeed that, with only a few miles dividing them, you see on the one bank primitive man as he was centuries ago, and on the other the highly cultivated European, both equally ignorant of the life of the other. It seems almost incredible that, for nearly four generations, civilization and Christianity have sat facing barbarism and heathenism, and yet have stood wholly apart. No great and impassable barrier has divided the two; on the contrary, the crossing from one bank to the other is simple, and, even under the most unfavourable circumstances, a matter of only a few hours. One of the finest lines of river steamers has been plying far up the course of the River Paraguay for many years, and ever since the power of Spain was planted in South America communication has been regularly maintained between Europe and these regions.

But the contrast between civilization and barbarism is not the only one that presents itself. The two sides of the river are physically quite as different. On the west lies an almost dead-level plain, covering an area of some two hundred thousand square miles, while on the east hilly and undulating country predominates. The great western plain is of quite a different geological formation from that of the eastern lands, consisting of alluvial mud swept down in past ages from the foot-hills of the Andes. Not a pebble or stone can be found, and it is often in flood-time almost converted into a great shallow lake; whereas the eastern region is in most parts an interesting country, with

hill and dale and clear running streams. It looks as if this low-lying land had been, at some remote period, the bed of a great inland sea, the shores of which were the higher coasts of Paraguay proper, with Brazil on the east, and the Bolivian uplands on the west.

It was to this strange land that I was sent by the South American Missionary Society in the year 1889. A small Mission had already been begun by Adolpho Henricksen among the Lengua Indians frequenting the Chaco bank of the River Paraguay, and on his death I was appointed at the age of twenty-three to succeed him. For the last twenty years I have lived in the interior of the Chaco region, at first alone with the Indians, being afterwards joined by helpers sent out by the Society; but the contents of this work will deal mainly with the events and experiences of the early years of my life among some of the Chaco tribes, and among the Lenguas in particular.

Long before I arrived I had heard, in conversation with South Americans in the River Plate, numberless rumours of the barbarous peoples inhabiting the Chaco, and curious reports of the land itself. The very name "Chaco" was mentioned by many whom I met in accents of dread and horror. Some reports said that the Indians numbered hundreds of thousands, that they were fierce and warlike, given to cannibalism, and exceptionally cruel in the treatment of their prisoners.

It is well known that during the early Spanish times the Chaco Indians were more numerous than now, and that they presented an almost unconquerable front to the Spanish invaders, not so much, I suppose, from their superiority in fighting as from the impracticable nature of their country. Previous to the Spanish occupation they had waged war for generations with the Guarani Indians of Paraguay, and as the population of Paraguay is the result of intermixture between the Spanish and Guarani peoples, this may account in some measure for the uncomfortable memories that the latter still retain of the Chaco Indians.

An Englishman whom I met in Uruguay, and who had travelled widely in many parts of South America, honestly did

his best to dissuade me from ever thinking of going among the Chaco tribes, assuring me that these treacherous savages had been known to haunt the steps of the adventurous explorer, and, taking advantage of him while he slept, to creep up and crush his head with a stone. This gentleman was not romancing, but seriously believed what he said. Where the Indians found the stone he did not explain, and it is quite clear he was not aware even of the formation of the country, stones being unobtainable there. The tribes were reported to use the skulls of their enemies as drinking-cups, and with these to catch the warm blood that flowed from the wounds of their victims. It was also told that they were in the habit of burning the soles of their captives' feet in order to prevent them from escaping.

The accounts of the various tortures which they were supposed to practise upon their prisoners were many and barbarous in the extreme. It was said that they made incisions under the two great pectoral muscles, and, passing a rope through the wounds, mounted their horses and dragged their captive behind them. At other times, cutting open the breast, they tore out the still beating heart of their victim. But to recount the many tales of Indian atrocities would only nauseate the reader, and what I have already said will suffice as samples of the cruelties they were reported to practise.

A firm belief existed that the Indians bitterly hated any foreigner, and anyone who ventured into their fastnesses without a strongly armed band would have been regarded as a maniac and a suicide, no white man's life being considered worth more than a few hours' purchase.

There was reported to be a large and populous Indian town in the interior, and this was the general belief among most of the Paraguayans. Even the more intelligent and critical believed in the existence of large villages, inhabited by thousands of Indians. The savage inhabitants were reputed to be void of all decency, and their social life to be little better than that of animals. Among the more incredible tales were legends of a horned race inhabiting the interior. A horn was said to protrude from the top of the forehead, as in the fabled

unicorn. Probably the custom of the Indians of wearing an upright wool-bound scalp-lock gave rise to this tale. But even more strange was the story of a people inhabiting the north whose knee-joints were reversed, giving them the appearance of the ostrich, so that when they knelt their feet protruded in front of them. I afterwards learnt from the Indians that, strange to say, they too told a similar story, with this addition—that these people had three toes, and were very fleet of foot. There were accounts of a race of pigmies inhabiting the forests of the west, and also of a tribe of giants.

The reports about the nature of the country were almost as conflicting as those referring to the tribes. Some maintained that it was a waterless desert, and I have myself read in a school geography book that the Chaco was supposed to be a sandy waste. While one told me that it was a densely covered forest region, where I might travel for days without beholding the sun, another would say that it was a huge swamp or inland sea.

Some imagined the Chaco to possess great mineral wealth, saying that precious stones and gold were to be found in the river-beds. Strange animals and huge serpents were supposed to abound in its dark forests. "Omne ignotum pro magnifico est."

Most of these rumours I found to be pure fiction, and the others greatly distorted; but the neighbouring peoples, while perhaps not believing all they were told, undoubtedly had an undefined dread of the Chaco and its inhabitants.

Even to-day there are comparatively few who know the truth of this mysterious and hidden country, and of the Indian tribes who have for centuries held it closed to the European. Therefore I may justly refer to this region as an unknown land, and with still more justice speak of its inhabitants as an unknown people.

CHAPTER II

DANGERS OF ENTRANCE

The ideas entertained of the Indians being such as I have described, it is no wonder that they were held in dread. Henricksen, the founder of the Paraguayan Chaco Mission, when starting on his journey up river, was strongly urged by the Paraguayans to take a military guard with him; in fact, one was offered, but this he firmly refused. It is true that he never penetrated into the Indian country, but, had he been able to do so, I am perfectly certain he would never have consented to be accompanied by an armed force.

On my arrival in Paraguay, in 1889, I heard many more startling rumours than those already instanced, and although common sense naturally convinced me that some of them were false, still, I believed a good deal more than there was any foundation for. It took me some years to discover this, and danger believed in is no less a nervous strain because it afterwards proves unfounded. But apart from all exaggerations, travelling alone in the early years amongst these savage nomads was fraught with considerable danger, not so much on account of their enmity as from misunderstandings on both sides, and superstitious fears on theirs.

When we remember that Dr. Creveaux, the French explorer, and his party were massacred in recent years by the Indians, that some time after I had been in the country Ibareta and his party (with the exception of two) were annihilated, and that Boggiani with other Europeans and South Americans have been murdered, it is clear that the Indians did not hesitate to kill foreigners even when in armed parties.

It was reported to me by a man of authority that an inscription had been discovered upon a tree intimating that two Frenchmen were being held in cruel bondage by the Indians a little southward of the scene of my travels. One Paraguayan woman, the last remaining member of a party of prisoners taken by the Indians years before, was liberated while I was travelling in the country, and I discovered afterwards that I had myself spent nights with the Indians in the near vicinity of the scene of her captivity.

The following quotation from a letter to the President of Paraguay by a well-known Government Land Surveyor, who was one of the coolest and bravest men that it was ever my fortune to meet, will show what he considered necessary precautions while he was travelling in the Chaco: "I took with me fifteen specially selected men, all armed with Remington rifles and revolvers, and I never allowed anyone to go alone to seek water or to explore our road. We always rode in company and armed, and never went far from our encampment. At night we set sentinels, and slept with our weapons at hand. When measuring, if we saw smoke, we fell back on our main body, and any signs of Indians made us advance with redoubled caution. In the Indian village of the Chief called Mechi, near the Monte Lindo River, our horses disappeared, and while a portion of our party sought them, the remainder, who were in camp, were surprised by a company of naked Indians, painted and adorned with feathers, who certainly had no peaceable or friendly intentions."

From the Indians I received an account of a strange foreigner, evidently a straggler from some exploring party, who had arrived one night at an Indian village about two days south of where I was staying. He seemed worn and hungry, his clothes were in tatters, and, approaching cautiously, he sat down by one of the fires. The Indians spoke to him, but as he did not understand their language, they could make nothing of him. They conferred among themselves, and concluded that this man could have no good purpose there, and might probably, if spared, show an attacking party of foreigners the way into their country.

They therefore, without more ado, despatched him with their clubs where he sat. Doubtless the poor fellow was driven by hunger and thirst to the point of recklessness, preferring to die by the hands of Indians rather than endure a lingering death by starvation, and there was just the faint hope that the Indians might treat him humanely and spare his life.

Two men alone escaped from Ibareta's expedition on the River Pilcomayo. They travelled for weeks, subsisting as best they could, and always carefully avoiding beaten tracks; but on entering the sphere of the Mission influence, they were met by an Indian who took them to his village and looked after them carefully, informing them that English people lived to the north, and that he would guide them to their village, which he did. Some time after this a Spanish gentleman arrived at the Mission station with letters of introduction, soliciting our help in searching for the missing explorer, and endeavouring to ascertain whether he were dead or alive. He informed me of his intention of taking with him an armed party of sixty men, but I refused all help if he did so. Eventually my friend Pride and a companion, both of the Mission staff, were instructed to accompany him with a few Indians, and they in due course reached the Pilcomayo. The search, however, proved fruitless.

Early in 1890 the Right Rev. Dr. Stirling, first Bishop of the Falkland Isles and Superintendent of the Society's Missions, ordered me to penetrate into the interior and investigate fully the numbers, location, and attitude of the various tribes, with the view of ascertaining how best to prosecute the Mission already begun by Henricksen. I could have availed myself of an armed guard; in fact, I was urged by many well-wishers to do so, but, as a missionary and messenger of peace, such a course would not only have been inconsistent, but inadvisable. Had I begun this work under armed protection, it would have incensed the Indians against me, as they would have looked upon me as a possible enemy, and they would also have concluded from my coming in force that I was to some extent afraid of them. The only course open, therefore, was to go alone, and trust

myself entirely in their hands. The foregoing instances of Ibareta and others serve to show how exceedingly fraught with danger such a course was.

There was, however, a greater source of danger, of which I was ignorant at the time when I first entered the Chaco, and that was not merely the hostility of the Indians to foreigners, but their superstitious fears. Had sickness, for example, broken out in a village through which I had passed, I should in all probability have been held responsible for it, and, if any deaths had resulted, they would have felt justified by their laws in putting me to death. Also their peculiar belief regarding dreams[1] would supply the basis for any number of accusations against me, and, being a foreigner travelling alone, and thus a mystery to them, I should naturally become the subject of many of their dreams. Any foreigner would be liable to get into trouble in like manner, but in my case the fact that the people, for various reasons, looked upon me from the beginning as a foreign wizard, and my habit of inquiring into their customs and religious rites and beliefs, continually increased my danger.

I was anxious, for example, to explain to the people as soon as possible my reason for being among them, and accordingly tried to make it clear to them that I came with a message of peace, and sought their spiritual welfare. But, through an inadequate knowledge of the language, I unwittingly assured them that I was the intimate and particular friend of the greatest of *evil* spirits, and that I had come among them in order to make them better acquainted with him. The Indian very sensibly considered that he knew quite enough about him already, and had no desire to make his further acquaintance, and the fact that I professed to be his friend and servant gave them by no means a favourable idea of my respectability, nor recommended my presence among them.

As I learnt more of their customs, I began gradually to realize the many dangers which I had unconsciously run the risk of incurring. Had I met with an accident or fallen sick during my

[1] See Chapter XIII.

solitary sojourn among them and swooned away, I should in all probability have been buried, as the Indians do not distinguish very carefully between prolonged unconsciousness and actual death, and in my case, as I was a stranger and one regarded with suspicion and with a certain amount of fear, they would not have used too much discrimination. To these grave dangers I may add the risk I ran of being taken captive or of being forsaken by the Indians with whom I travelled, and thus having to find my way as best I could in a wilderness land.

Having previously had nearly four years' experience among the Yaghan Indians of Tierra del Fuego, and having studied Indian life and character from all other possible sources, I was not altogether a novice when I entered upon my work in the Chaco. But I afterwards found that the conditions of this new sphere were very different from all that I had known before. The plans which I had formed for myself, although they did not take into account the unforeseen conditions which had to be faced, yet worked so admirably that I was enabled to travel and live alone among these people for some years, gaining a great measure of influence and authority over them.

Experienced explorers, Government officials, settlers, traders, and others, on hearing of my determination to enter the Chaco alone and to live with the Indians, warned me of the dangers I was incurring, and assured me that such a step was tantamount to committing suicide. The kind-hearted peasants and many friends whose acquaintance I had made during my few months' residence on the river's bank implored me not to throw away my life, and some, with tears in their eyes, invoked the protection of the Virgin and Saints on my behalf when they found I would not be dissuaded. So prevalent was the opinion that I should assuredly lose my life that on three occasions in particular, owing to my prolonged absence and to reports from river Indians, the rumour of my death was readily accepted. Once it was only by making a forced voyage all night in a canoe that I was enabled to prevent an official announcement of my death being sent home by the British Consul at Asuncion.

Humanly speaking, my preservation during these early years

was mainly due to the attitude which I had decided on in my own mind as the best to adopt in dealing with such a people. That attitude was briefly this : to assume at all times and under all circumstances superiority and authority, for Indians only respect the strong, and have no regard whatever for a man of weak character and wavering will. Should they once detect any signs of fear on my part, I knew that my work among them would prove a failure, and that they would at once assume it to be weakness if I sought protection from their Chiefs. Again, if I had endeavoured to curry favour with them by giving presents, they would never have been satisfied, and would have resorted to threats in order to extort more from me. Being a stranger and a guest in their country, I considered it wise to respect, as far as possible, their customs and laws, but at the same time I determined to show them very clearly that I did not intend to be bound by such restrictions when they interfered with my plans.

I knew that their witch-doctors would treat me with open hostility, and that they would prove the greatest obstacle to the foundation of a mission among their people. While many of the native customs might profitably be retained, and while it was wise that the Chiefs should maintain their authority, I realized that it was otherwise in the case of the wizards. Their influence was entirely evil, and if Christianity was ever to take hold of the people, the wizards must cease to exist. Chiefs and people alike feared the witch-doctor, and although I knew that the experiment was dangerous, I felt that I must declare open war against them, and treat their threats and boasted powers with contempt. In this way I hoped to baffle the wizards, knowing that they themselves were sceptical of the powers which they professed to possess, and that their superstitious ignorance was such that they believed it was quite possible that there might be other wizards who really had powers such as they claimed. I hoped, moreover, to convince the Indians that I, being altogether superior to their wizards, was well worthy of their respect, and capable of imparting to them knowledge which their witch-doctors did not possess. I was

convinced that, by living in their villages, mixing freely with them, taking part in their ordinary life, joining in their amusements, sometimes even adopting their costume, and by in every way in my power making myself one of them, I should win a place in their hearts.

Perhaps a few general instances given here will best illustrate the way in which I carried out this policy.

On arriving at a village, I insisted, as far as possible, upon all the people ministering to my personal comfort. I ordered one to prepare my resting-place, another to make a fire, a third to bring me water, and another to pull off my knee-boots. When the heat was great or the flies troublesome, I made two sit by me with fans. When on foot, and having to cross a swampy patch, I made one of them carry me across—in fact, I avoided doing anything myself that I could persuade them to do for me. I generally travelled with seven or eight Indian attendants, occasionally giving them a small present for their services, and I assumed as much pomp as the circumstances would allow. In cases of difficulty, however, such as battling with a pampas fire, getting refractory animals across a river, and the like, I took a leading part myself, in order to show them that I could do such things when necessary.

I studied their varying dispositions, and whenever I found that they were likely to disobey an order, I refrained from giving it, so that they might never realize that they could disobey me, or that I really had no means of making them carry it out. One night I had told them that I intended resuming my journey at the rising of the morning star. After I had lain down to sleep, I overheard them saying that they would not go on in the morning, as they intended hunting till mid-day. I made a note of this. On the morrow, after they had boiled my kettle, they told me the star would soon be up, and asked if I should be ready to start. I knew perfectly well that there would be trouble, so I answered: "No; I intend to remain here till the afternoon." Presently they asked permission to go hunting, and this I granted to all but one, impressing upon them that they must be back by early after-

noon. This suited them perfectly, although it did not suit me, but it enabled me to assert my authority without danger of its being disputed, although they unknowingly had in reality gained the mastery.

It was sometimes very difficult not to betray a sign of nervousness when in a tight corner; still, I knew that any symptom of fear would be my undoing. On one occasion when the Indians were very angry with me, one man actually fixed an arrow in his bow, and, pushing the point against my chest, threatened to drive it through me. I could clearly see that he was only trying to intimidate me, and I managed to burst out into a fit of, I must confess, very insincere and forced laughter. He shrank back surprised, and, following up my advantage, I abused him heartily, and took the first opportunity to go off with assumed disdain, but really to avoid further danger.

The various clans are extremely jealous of each other. One day I required the services of twelve men, and accordingly applied to the Chief, but he refused. I then dealt directly with the men myself. They were willing, but said that their Chief would not allow them. "Oh, all right," I said; "if you cannot obey me, I will go and stay at Yithwase-yamilkit. I cannot be thwarted in this way." I could see at once that, rather than allow me to do this, they would comply with my wishes in spite of their Chief. They went and consulted with him, and then came back to tell me that they would do as I wished. I refused their services, but after a time relented, on condition that they nominated another Chief and deposed the present one. They again consulted. Presently the Chief himself came to me, assumed a very aggrieved tone, informed me that he had always been my friend, and inquired the reason of my wrath. I told him he was well aware of the cause, and he expressed regret, saying that he would at once order his men to do as I wanted. I therefore agreed to overlook the matter, but impressed upon him that it must not occur again. To have coaxed him, given him a present, or to have supplicated his good offices, would have resulted in his victimizing me whenever he thought it would suit his purpose.

It was impossible, as I have said, for me to be other than always in open opposition to the wizards, and many of my Indian friends frequently counselled me to be more discreet in my dealings with them, assuring me that these men had great powers, and would some day resent my behaviour to them and bewitch me. I was well aware that there was considerable danger in opposing them, but it was absolutely necessary that I should show no fear of them, in order to convince the people that their claims were fraudulent. On one occasion, after a great discussion upon the question of witchcraft, I challenged the wizards to give a display of their power. I offered to sit down twenty paces from them, and allow them to work upon me with such enchantments as entailed no personal handling of me. They professed to be able to do marvels at a great distance from the person they wished to bewitch, and I told them that they should the more easily be able to do so at so short a distance, but they one and all declined the challenge. The natives seemed convinced that they doubted their power over me, and realized fully that I had no fear whatever of them.

What measure of success or failure attended the policy which I adopted during my wanderings with the Indians the reader will be able to estimate for himself in the following chapter, and from other episodes recounted in this narrative.

CHAPTER III

INTO THE UNKNOWN

A FEW months previous to my arrival in Paraguay, Adolpho Henricksen, the founder of the Mission, had died from the effects of exposure on the river. He had established a temporary station at Riacho Fernandez, an island in the River Paraguay, some thirty miles north of Villa Concepción, and his constant journeys in a canoe to and from this town, exposed to all weathers, proved too much for his constitution. His two companions left the Mission soon after my arrival, and I thus had to make my way single-handed.

I found Riacho Fernandez by no means a desirable or beautiful spot. Mosquitos hung about all day, and at night were so troublesome that I had early to seek the shelter of my net. In addition to these pests, sandflies, horseflies, and fleas made life almost intolerable. The island was sandy, and swarmed with ants—little red, stinging creatures, which got into all the food, and swarmed so thickly on to the table during meals that it was necessary to skim the soup. The sugar was always a mass of ants, and the only means of getting rid of them was by putting them with the sugar into the tea or coffee, and skimming them off when they rose to the surface. My food consisted chiefly of biscuits, rice, and sun-dried meat. Owing to the damp, hot climate, this meat soon became filled with maggots, but in the process of stewing these also rose to the surface, and were easily got rid of.

During my short stay on this island I acquired a very limited vocabulary of Indian words, and a still more limited pronunciation. The language had yet to be reduced to writing, and,

owing to the lack of articulation in an Indian's speech, it was a difficult matter to acquire even a few words; and in order to prevent me learning their language, they gave me the wrong words more often than the right. However, by noting down sounds in my note-book, which I always had at hand, I was able to pick up a few words, which stood me in good stead on my early expeditions.

I soon discovered that the original design of trying to win the Indians who could be attracted to the comparatively safe position which I held on the bank of the River Paraguay was utterly impracticable. Few Indians frequented the bank of this river, and those who did so had become very degenerate—had taken to drink and other bad habits—through their intercourse with the foreign settlements. The real Indian population lived in the interior, and there, consequently, lay my goal. It was with alacrity that I obeyed Bishop Stirling's orders to push into the interior, with the view of establishing a Mission in the heart of the Chaco. I fully realized that the element of personal danger would be vastly greater there than at Riacho Fernandez, but it was equally patent that no Indian Mission could be established with that as its base.

Having heard of a well populated line running westward towards the River Pilcomayo, I determined to penetrate in that direction, with a view to examining what possibilities there were among the Indians there.

In order not to be tedious to the reader, I shall refrain from giving a detailed account of this and other journeys which I made during my first four years in the interior, throughout which period I was continually on the move from place to place, living alone with the Indians. I shall confine myself to some of the more interesting incidents and experiences, which will show the effects of the policy adopted in my early acquaintance with this unknown people.

For my first journey I selected five river Indians as guides, but they were not very anxious to go, putting all kinds of objections in my way. At the very outset they purposely endeavoured to delay me by continually pretending to lose the

track, hoping by this means to induce me to give up the attempt in disgust. Eventually, however, we arrived at a village called Kilmesakthlapomap ("the place of burnt pigs"). As my guides were dawdling behind, evidently afraid of the reception they would meet with for bringing a strange foreigner into their fastnesses, I rode on ahead of them right up into the midst of the village. The Indians, who were in strong force, were holding a feast, at which apparently a plentiful supply of native beer was being consumed. I heard afterwards that they had had news of the possibility of my arrival among them, but my sudden appearance seemed to fill them with astonishment.

Annoyed at the conduct of my guides, I determined to take a high hand, and so beckoned to a young Indian standing by, and ordered him to take my horse to water. My vocabulary being very limited, I was compelled to make considerable use of signs. Beckoning to a woman, I pointed to a shady tree near by, and, sitting down upon the ground, gave her to understand that I would camp under that tree, and, pointing to a fire, I told her to take it and place it there for my convenience. I then walked round the village, beating off the dogs with my whip, and selected a piece of pumpkin here and there and a few potatoes. These I gave to a man, and signed to him to put them under the tree where I intended to camp. By this time my horse had been brought back, so I unsaddled it, and then gave the lad instructions as well as I could to let it loose and to look after it. I then called one of the boys to me, and sent him off with my kettle to the swamp for water, and thus the arrangements for my comfort were complete.

I afterwards learnt from the Indians that my high-handed behaviour, which, if shown by one of their own people, not only would have been considered insufferably rude, but would have been strongly resented, had filled them with surprise. They could not understand how a defenceless stranger could act in this way among so many people. They said it made them fear me, as they felt I must be possessed of some occult power. But they had determined among themselves to watch my movements very closely, and to test me that very night.

I knew that my safety lay in the fact that I acted without any show of power in arms; instead of threatening a native, I took it for granted that he would obey me. The course of action which I followed on this occasion was deliberately thought out. I was well aware that these Indians did not want me in their country, that they were suspicious of me, and I knew, too, that I had no power with which to carry my point. I was only one among many; I could not even have got back to the river without their aid, and I could not possibly go forward without their co-operation. On the other hand, I knew the Indian well enough to be sure that if I adopted a timid and gentle attitude, and, as it were, asked him to accommodate me as a favour, he, mistaking that attitude for weakness, would have taken advantage of me. It must be remembered that as far as the Indian was concerned I was a foreigner, and therefore one of the enemy; and the only explanation that I can give for their allowing me to enter their country as I did, is that they were merely curious to know what I wanted, and as I was defenceless, they were not much afraid of me.

But the tone of authority which I took nonplussed them. It was not sufficient for my purposes that I should be merely suffered in their country as a harmless creature. The Indian is superstitious and impulsive, and if my inoffensiveness had been my only passport, I might have fallen a victim at any moment, and the chances of my gaining an influence over them for their good would have been remote. But when he saw me apparently defenceless, and yet assuming an air of authority, the Indian was puzzled, as I intended he should be. I afterwards learnt that they did not regard me as an ordinary foreigner, and that they were impressed by the fact that I never threatened violence, but simply assumed that they must submit to my wishes.

My refractory guides, who had joined me in the village, refused to conduct me further west, so I dismissed them and sent them back to the River Paraguay. I was therefore entirely at the mercy of people, knowing none and being known of none. As night drew on I deemed it expedient to so arrange my bed as to be able to lie on the top of most of my baggage,

for fear of any attempt at pilfering. I was justified in taking these precautions, for it seems that the Indians had determined to rifle my belongings that night, in order to see what attitude I would take. Not long after I had retired to rest under my net, I saw two dark figures stealthily moving round, and presently I felt a hand inserted beneath me and fumbling at my baggage. They evidently supposed me to be asleep, but when I suddenly put out my head and shouted at them, they disappeared precipitately. I spent an anxious and watchful night, but received no more visitors.

On the following morning I called the Chief, and did my best to make him understand that I wanted to travel five days to the west, to the village of their war Chief, Yahoyispuk ("Stork-neck"), and that I required guides for the journey. Much talking followed, but no volunteers came forward, and it was very evident that they did not want me to go on. I offered a pair of cotton trousers as a reward to the first man who should volunteer to accompany me, but even they did not seem to attract. I had another pair, evidently made out of the end of the piece of calico, for stamped in blue ink upon one of the legs was the British Lion and "30 yards, Manchester." This was too much for the witch-doctor, for he at once offered to go if I would give him that pair. I agreed, and he was proceeding to try them on when I stopped him, and gave him to understand that they would not be his until he had completed his contract. He was not too well pleased at this, but apparently agreed to the bargain, so in due time we set off, and after many vicissitudes arrived at the village of Yahoyispuk.

CHAPTER IV

EARLY EXPERIENCES

Towards the end of the year 1890 I returned from the interior to Riacho Fernandez, and as I had no companion to look after my few belongings, I found it necessary to remove them to Villa Concepción, where I rented a room for the purpose.

Early in 1891 I made an extended tour in Paraguay proper, in order to see what opportunities there might be of reaching the Indians on that side, but as I am confining myself in this work to the Chaco, I shall not dwell upon the difficulties and adventures met with on that journey.

Riacho Fernandez, which was the property of an English land company, was now occupied by them as a wood-cutting station, and on my return there I found that the Indians had broken into their store, and had carried off a considerable quantity of goods. I accordingly resolved to visit the Indians concerned, in order to see if I could persuade them to return what they had stolen, or at least to give compensation.

When I declared my intention of following up the thieves, I was laughed at by the Paraguayans and the representatives of the company. They told me that the looters had retired many leagues into the interior for fear of reprisals, and that they were reported to be in a very dangerous mood. Nevertheless, I considered it well worth my while to make the attempt. It was clearly quite as dangerous to penetrate into the country in any other direction, as I knew that the report of what these Indians had done must by this time have reached the Indian villages far and wide. If the delinquents were not punished or brought to see the error of their ways, it was perfectly clear that

they would behave towards me, if I established any station among them, especially in the interior, as they had towards the English company. Again, if I could succeed in making them pay for all they had taken, it would be a great recommendation for my system of dealing with them, and would tend to gain me the support and sympathy so urgently needed in the great undertaking contemplated.

I accordingly found my way on foot to a small Indian encampment near a forest, about six miles inland. There I met an old Indian who possessed a horse. After some difficulty, I persuaded him to take me to the village of the thieves, and, mounting behind him on the same horse, without a saddle, I travelled about eighteen miles, until we reached a place called Neantamama, where I found the culprits. They were rather defiant and insolent at first, but with the little language at my disposal I attacked them vigorously on the subject of the theft, explaining to them that it had been my intention to throw in my lot with their people and make my home among them, but that I could not think of doing so unless they took steps to throw off this reproach on their character. On my telling them that they would probably be attacked by the Paraguayans, they only laughed, and said they were not afraid. I then informed them that all along the River Paraguay they were regarded as thieves and sneaking foxes, and that I could never again take any of them with me to Concepción, because I too should be looked upon as a thief if I consorted with thieves. They got angry at this, and reminded me that I was alone, while they were many. I told them that I had no fear, and that only six months before, as they well knew, I had journeyed alone to the village of their great war Chief, Yahoyispuk. Turning sharply on one of them, I reminded him how I had acted on an occasion, some nine months previously, when he pushed his arrow-point against my chest and threatened to shoot me. "Which of us was most afraid then?" I said. At this some of his people smiled, and he clearly showed that he did not appreciate the reminder.

Eventually they invited me to sit down and discuss the theft

question. The result of this conversation was that they agreed to repay the value of what they had stolen in skins and feathers, but only on condition that I promised to go with them to the foreigners, and afterwards to return and live with them. To this I agreed, but took the precaution of remaining at their village until they got together the necessary amount of skins and feathers.

During this period of waiting relations between us were somewhat strained. They wanted me to promise that I would confine myself to their village, and become a member of their particular clan. This I refused to do, telling them that I intended eventually to make my headquarters in the interior of their country, and that I would not rest till all the Indians were my people. They told me that the clans in the interior would kill me, and that it was absurd to expect that their people as a whole would allow me to have a position of power among them, whereas they, being my friends, were willing to receive me. I knew that this was mere jealousy, and, addressing a few of them, whom I had taken with me on my first expedition into the interior, I taunted them with the manner in which they had tricked me, the difficulties they had put in my way, and their cowardly action in leaving me in the midst of their unknown country to find my way as best I could.

In a few days the necessary amount of skins and feathers was procured by hunting, and, accompanied by the Indians, I returned to Riacho Fernandez, and paid them over to the English company as compensation for the theft.

Cheered by the influence which I seemed to have gained, I became hopeful of the future success of my work, and accordingly returned with this party of Indians and established myself with them at Neantamama. As I intended to remain there for some months, and found it inconvenient to live actually in the village, I made the Indians build a separate hut for me. It was about eleven feet high at the ridge, and a little over six feet to the wall-plate. The walls consisted of palm-logs and sticks, about eighteen inches apart, and were made partly weather-proof by a rough thatching of grass. The roof also was of

grass thatch. There was no door to this dwelling, but as a substitute a bush was stuck in the opening as a protection against the entrance of dogs. My table consisted of four palm-stumps stuck into the ground, with a deer-skin stretched over them, and my seat was made of two half palm-stems fixed on to two uprights. I slept on the floor, on a sheep-skin. My possessions I placed in Indian net-bags slung from the rafters.

One day the Indians killed a cow, and I secured a quarter of it from which to make *charqui*, or sun-dried meat. These strips of meat I took in at night, and strung them up to the rafters for security. On the following night, while asleep under my net, I was awakened by a rustling noise outside. I listened attentively, thinking at first it might be a dog, but the careful way in which the grass at the foot of the wall was being gently torn out convinced me that it was a man, and not a dog. I accordingly waited developments, and presently a dark, shaggy head wormed its way through the wall. Gently loosening the folds of my mosquito-net from beneath my sheep-skin bed, which was laid within a few feet of the wall, I shot out my hand and caught a firm hold of the intruder's back hair, at the same time pinning his face down to the ground. It was a most ludicrous sight to see this naked man thus caught in a trap, lying on his stomach, his head protruding through the thatch, wedged face downwards, and my hand firmly gripping his hair. I then inquired who my visitor was, and from muffled sounds I discovered it was "Alligator Stomach." By way of explanation, he coolly told me that he had heard dogs near my hut, and, fearing for the safety of my meat, he had simply come to drive them out. Still retaining my hold of him, I asked why he had gone to the trouble of breaking through my wall instead of coming through the doorway, and told him that, in my opinion, he was the dog; then, pushing his head roughly through the hole, I bade him begone. He was known to me as a greedy and worthless fellow, and yet, although caught in such a position, he coolly professed to have been acting on my behalf.

This was not the first occasion on which the Indians had in this way shown their consideration for me. While at Riacho

Fernandez, the old Chief and some of his people repeatedly brought me presents of vegetables, and refused to receive any payment for them. But, being rather softened by such generosity, I insisted upon giving them a present in return, which consisted of rice and biscuits. This went on for several days; but, happily, one night I slept badly, and, feeling irritable, I got up from my bed. Quite contrary to my custom, I took a walk in the direction of my garden, just as the first streak of dawn was appearing. In the dim light I could discern dark shadows moving about in my potato-patch, and, on approaching nearer, I discovered the secret of the Indians' generosity. There was the old Chief, with two others, busily digging up my potatoes, undoubtedly intending to bring them to me an hour or so later as a present, and in return, of course, to receive a gift of gratitude from me. But the game was up, much to their disgust and greatly to my satisfaction. I gave them the benefit of my limited vocabulary, and made a mental note of the discovery for future use.

Many of the neighbouring Indians had joined the party with which I originally settled at Neantamama, and I had been urging upon them for some time the advisability of combining to form one large permanent village, and of giving up their nomadic habits. My efforts met with some measure of success; and having in the course of hunting expeditions with the natives discovered a place called Thlagnasinkinmith ("the place of the *garapata*, or ticks"), I decided on this site, and the Indians expressed their willingness to accompany me thither.

Before making this move I thought it wise to visit Concepción to settle some of my business matters, because, once the new venture was in hand, I might not be able to get away for many months. I accordingly packed my things together, and, after giving them in charge of a few selected and influential Indians, I left for Concepción.

I was delayed much longer than I anticipated, and on my way up river it was reported to me that the Indians to whom I had entrusted my property had stolen it and decamped. Those foreigners who gave me this information exulted in the fact,

and added bitterness to my disappointment by saying that they had always told me it was no good trusting an Indian, that they were treacherous and vicious, and that the only good Indian was a dead one.

On arrival at my port of disembarkation I met an Indian. who informed me that my stuff had not been stolen, but had been left safely in my hut, adding that my Indians, who were encamped near a forest some eight miles inland, did not want to associate any further with me. On hearing this I proceeded at once to their camp, and upbraided them bitterly for their desertion. They entered into no excuses, but simply maintained that they wanted to have nothing more to do with me. I tried to prevail upon them at least to help me to bring my belongings to the River Paraguay, but they would not even do this.

I was thoroughly dispirited and cast down, and began to think that I should never be able to form a Mission among them. The Jesuits, generations before, had endeavoured to reach other Chaco tribes, but had failed to establish any lasting work among them ; and I could not help thinking that, if they had failed, with advantages on their side greater than mine, how could I possibly hope to succeed ?

Just as I was contemplating a return to the river, four men were espied coming in from the west. I hastened out to meet them, anxious to have an interview with them before they could communicate with the people in the camp. My main object was to ascertain from them whether they had seen my goods, and thus to assure myself of the guilt or innocence of the others, for I began to fear that the report of their theft which I had heard at the river might after all be correct. On meeting the visitors, I recognized them at once. One was Yokseyi, the Chief of a village I touched at on my first long expedition into the interior ; and one of his companions was also a celebrated Chief. Another was the witch-doctor who accompanied me as guide, and whom I rewarded with the pair of trousers bearing the Lion and Manchester mark. The remaining one was the man who had tried to steal my goods on which I was lying during the first night that I spent in the interior.

I was delighted to see them, and explained to them my plight, and the attitude of the people in the village behind me. They informed me that they had seen my things in my hut, and that they were then on their way to the river to barter their feathers and skins. The pipe was passed round, and we smoked for a few minutes in silence. I ventured to ask them if they would return with me and help me with my goods, and, greatly to my surprise, they at once agreed.

We then proceeded to join the others in the camp, and on my approach I could see clearly that a sharp discussion had been going on. As soon as the visitors were received this discussion was renewed. My four companions informed the people that they were going back with me to my hut. Angry words then ensued, but presently the second Chief of the camp, Pinse-apawa, and some of the people with him, rose and informed me that they, too, were prepared to go. We accordingly lost little time in setting out on the journey inland, where I found my goods intact.

This incident is remarkable, because, humanly speaking, had it not been for my meeting with these four men, I should have had to abandon, at least for some time, perhaps for ever, my attempt to settle among this people. The witch-doctor and Yokseyi eventually became sincere Christians and the other two fast friends. Through them I was led in the end to establish the Mission in the far interior, and from their clan the first adherents to the Christian Church were won. Pinse-apawa and his people, although they continued with me for a time, eventually left me, and from none of these river-people have we yet succeeded in winning a convert.

I was doomed to lose my property after all, for, while making preparations at Neantamama for our move to Thlagnasinkinmith, my hut caught fire. The season being a very dry one, and my hut being built of the inflammable material already mentioned, the evening breeze quickly fanned the flames, with the result that we could save very little owing to the fierce heat and blinding smoke. While gazing at the destruction, I suddenly remembered a small case containing about nine pounds of

powder, which was lying in the hut. I shouted to the people to stand clear, but to my surprise, and before anyone could prevent her, an old woman rushed forward. In some marvellous manner she got possession of the case, which was lying near one of the walls, and, fighting her way through the smoke and flames, she placed it triumphantly at a safe distance. Some loose tins of powder which still remained in the hut presently exploded, greatly to the consternation of the Indians, and in a few minutes the hut fell in, and all was over.

As all my property was consumed—clothes, boots, watch, and other important belongings—I was compelled to adopt the costume of the Indians for a time, until the order which I had sent to Concepción for more clothes could be carried out. Therefore, on this migration to Thlagnasinkinmith, I travelled in Indian fashion, with only a blanket. The Indians, being thoroughly delighted with my appearance, decorated me with some necklaces and an ostrich-feather head-dress, and honoured me with an additional name, "Tathnawu-lamum" (a dandy). Although I may have looked very picturesque to them in this costume, I suffered considerably from the bare parts of my body being attacked by the insects, but I experienced still greater pain from the want of boots. One of the Indians, however, made me some sheep-skin sandals, which were a great protection to my cut and blistered feet. It was about a month before I received a fresh and welcome supply of European clothing.

A site was soon cleared at Thlagnasinkinmith, and buildings were erected in native style, but greatly superior to their ordinary shelters. I built two palm huts for myself, and we laid out and planted gardens. But although success had been thus far achieved, yet I felt that there was still a certain element of distrust and fear of me in the minds of the natives. Some months before our settling at Thlagnasinkinmith an old woman became very ill with fever. I took the case in hand, and although the Indians thought she was going to die, yet within an hour or two after my treatment she was apparently much better. This gave me great prestige among the people, but unfortunately a few weeks afterwards the Chief's infant child fell sick. When

I was called to attend it, I found it was suffering from acute bronchial pneumonia, and past any possible hope of recovery. The child died, and the father evidently believed that I could have saved it if I had wished, and insinuated as much by referring to the case of the old woman.

This unfortunate incident had probably much to do with a later attempt to poison me. I was always careful to clean and fill my kettle, which served as teapot, and one day, after doing so, I placed it on the fire, and went away till it should boil. On my return I found it boiling, and, quite contrary to my usual custom—I do not know why—I raised the lid and looked inside, and there, to my surprise, I saw the leaves of some plant floating on the surface. On further examination I found quite a handful of these strange leaves inside, so I immediately questioned the Indians. They all pretended to be surprised and to know nothing about it, saying that they did not even know what plant it was. I had my suspicions, but could do nothing, and so, cleaning and refilling my kettle, I stood by until my tea was made.

After having been about a month at Thlagnasinkinmith, I found it necessary to send to the river for provisions. At this time I had the one horse that I rode myself; I possessed no bullock-waggon or pack-animals, and anything I required to bring out from the river had to be carried on the backs of the Indians. When acting thus as porters, they generally carried a load of from 50 to 60 pounds, and travelled fully thirty-five miles in the day. Finding it necessary, therefore, to send in men, I selected a few, and they all cheerfully and instantly obeyed with the exception of one—Kyitkuk-paisiam ("the black boy"). He not only seemed disinclined to go, but became insolent. He asked me what I intended to give him if he went, and I told him that I always gave what was just and proper, but that I could not allow him to argue the point with me. To this he gave a defiant answer, and I soon saw that there was likely to be trouble. I therefore changed my manner. I looked him up and down before the people, and asked him why he objected to go. He said the road was long, the burdens would be heavy,

and his feet would become sore. "Oh! what a mistake I have made!" I replied. "I thought I was speaking to one of the men, but I see it is one of the girls. Go away and weave blankets, my girl," I said. "Of course, no one could expect you to go all the way to the river and carry heavy burdens." Looking very angry, he went off sulking. His Chief, who was standing near, said to me: "Why don't you beat him?" I told him that unless his people would obey me willingly, I would go elsewhere, as it was not my object to use force among them. "I will speak to him," he said, and, calling him up, he told him before all the people that if ever he spoke to me again as he had just done, he would beat him with a stick. I afterwards learnt that this Chief was one of the few who still asserted the right to inflict corporal punishment upon his people. The whole nation, shortly before my arrival, from some cause which I have never been able to discover, had evidently become disorganized, and at the present day, even among the remoter villages which are uninfluenced by the outside world and hardly touched by the Mission, the process of disintegration and the dying out of all authority are plainly visible. From everything that I have been able to learn, the people were at one time completely under subjection to their Chiefs, and were much more organized than at any time of my acquaintance with them.

Shortly after this threat on the part of the Chief, the young man came to me, fully armed, and looking very defiant and insolent. "Are you angry?" he asked, in a tone as if he would like to pick a quarrel. "I am very angry!" I replied curtly, and turned away, affecting to ignore him. He, to my surprise, said in a perfectly changed voice: "I am just going to follow the men you have sent to the river and bring out your things." The Indian is often defiant enough so long as he thinks he can get the better of the matter, but he generally submits with a good grace when he finds that he is opposed by a stronger will. The educated Indian, however, rapidly acquires a much stronger will-power. He is also better able to judge the real measure of the strength opposed to him, and therefore becomes more difficult to manage, while, on the other hand, he is less

petulant, less fickle, more reasonable, and much more trustworthy. It therefore requires a stronger will to govern the educated Indian than is necessary to control him in his wild state.

I had from the very first made a strong stand against the people taking to the use of foreign liquor, for, in the first place, it was bad liquor, and, secondly, very much stronger and more injurious than their own intoxicants. My efforts in this direction had met with a considerable amount of success, which was partly due to the fact that I strictly avoided it myself. But one day an Indian thought he had caught me in the act. I was in my hut pouring into a glass a small dose of a quinine mixture, which certainly did contain a very small percentage of alcohol. It was an exceedingly bitter and nauseous concoction, which had been recommended to me as a preventive against malarial fever. While I was drinking this dose, Pinse-apawa happened to come in, and, looking suspicious, he took up the bottle and smelt the contents. "Ah!" he said, "this smells like foreign liquor." I at once motioned to him to be silent, for he had a knowing look on his face, as much as to say, "These things are not good for us, but you can take them." I told him that if he would promise me to say nothing about it to the rest, I would give him some.

His eyes sparkled with delight as I poured him out a good dose; he instantly gulped it down, but almost as quickly threw most of it up again, and with a look of intense disgust upon his face, said: "That is not foreign liquor." He never again expressed any desire to taste my patent beverages, and I believe he kept his promise of secrecy.

My line of action during the early years caused the Indians to form many and various impressions regarding my presence among them. At first some of them were inclined to believe that I was an ordinary foreigner come to exploit their country for timber or anything else of value. Others, owing to my evident desire to be friendly with them, to live as one of them, and to learn their language, held that I must be some great criminal who had been cast out of his tribe. Others, however, owing to the fact that,

PINSE-TAWA, A LENGUA WITCH-DOCTOR

A good type of a Lengua witch-doctor's face. Age about 55. Pockmarks and the absence of eyebrows, eyelashes, and all hair on the face is noticeable. The Indian considers himself superior to dogs, horses, and other hairy animals, and gives this as his reason for the painful operation of pulling out all hair on his body, the top of the head excepted.

instead of being apologetic, I assumed rather a tone of authority, and that I had some strange customs which they could not understand, believed that I was a powerful witch-doctor; but whether my presence would prove a benefit to them or otherwise they were rather doubtful. This latter opinion is unfortunately still held by the more remote tribes, and in the early years it placed me in many difficulties and no little danger.

The most marvellous powers have been attributed to me. I have been supposed to be able to hypnotize men and animals, to bring up the storms and south winds at will, to drive off sickness when I felt so inclined, and to be capable of any amount of endurance on account of the wonderful concoctions which I possessed. They believed that I had the power of the Evil Eye, and knowledge of the future; that I was able to discover all secrets, and to know the movements of people in different parts of the country.

I was supposed to be able, by my magic, to drive off the game from any particular part of the country, and to speak with the dead; in a word, to be on the most intimate and friendly terms with the powers of darkness. Even some of the lower and more ignorant Paraguayans have had some misgivings about my relationship with the powers of evil.

The witch-doctors naturally regarded me as their greatest opponent, but the common people rather welcomed me than otherwise, feeling that my presence among them added to their strength, and gave them a position superior to that of the neighbouring tribes and clans. When my resolve to make a cart-road from the River Paraguay into the interior was made known to the witch-doctors, they were more determined than ever to get rid of me, for they realized that the accomplishment of this feat would make my position permanent in their country. They accordingly (so I was afterwards told) for three months worked steadily for my overthrow. It seems that they decided not to resort to open violence, for fear lest my disembodied spirit might be more dangerous and troublesome to them than I was when in the body. At any rate, they concluded that my power of rapid movement would be infinitely increased thereby.

But die I must—if not by violence, then by their magic. My friend Pinse-apawa, who knew of this plot, kindly warned me of my danger, and earnestly endeavoured to dissuade me from attempting to take a bullock-cart into the interior.

In spite of his warning, I proceeded to carry out my design, and the difficulties of this journey, though great, were eventually overcome.

CHAPTER V

ORIGIN OF THE CHACO TRIBES

Padre Lozano, one of the early historians of Paraguay, informs us that the Gran Chaco was so named from the wholesale flight of the Peruvians into its fastnesses.

There are various theories advanced as to the origin of the name "Chaco." By some it is held to be a Quichua word, the Quichuas being the chief Indian people of Peru and Bolivia, and their ancestors having formed the main bulk of the population under the sway of the Incas. This word "Chaco," or "Chacu," is supposed to have signified a drive of wild animals, or a hunting ground. There is no doubt whatever that the Chaco was at least known to the Incas, if not actually dominated by them, for the influence and power of that ancient Indian Empire is well known to have been widespread. Among the various nations inhabiting the Chaco, considerable degrees of intelligence are to be met with, as well as very marked physical differences. The Palu and Kisapang, for example, are of a marked low type, and even among the other tribes the bulk of the population is evidently of a lower type than that of the minority. Families and groups are to be met with of lighter colour, and of finer and more intelligent features, which strike one as being of foreign origin. It is therefore quite possible that Padre Lozano's statement is correct, and this seems corroborated by the remarks of Dobrizhoffer,[1] a Jesuit father, who writes: "After the Spaniards had obtained dominion over Peru . . . it is credible that the Peruvians, to avoid this dreadful slavery, stole away wherever they could, and that many of them migrated

[1] "An Account of the Abiponi Indians."

into the neighbouring Tucuman, and thence, for the sake of security, into the deserts of the Chaco."

If this was so, it is probable that the headlong flight of the Peruvians may have given rise to the name "Chaco," for, in hastening to its fastnesses, they might well be likened to frightened animals *chased* or driven before the beaters. But it is quite as probable, and even more likely, that this region received its name long before the Spanish Conquest, on account of the Inca armies invading these lands in order to chastise the inhabitants for depredations committed on the frontier. The savages, being no match for the trained Inca troops, would naturally fly in all directions, many being overtaken and slain, and thus the similitude of a hunting-drive would be even more applicable. Some rather incline to the idea that the Chaco was so named because the Peruvians resorted thither for hunting purposes; but when we consider the distances, the inhospitable nature of the land, and the fact that it is a poor game country, I think this theory carries little weight.

There are many interesting facts which seem to point to an ancient connection between the Indians of the Chaco and the Incas. Their methods of weaving and the patterns introduced in their blankets are almost identical with those seen in the relics of ancient Peru. This similarity is also very marked in the case of the string bags which they make and use at the present day, and there is some slight resemblance in their pottery. The Lengua Indians of the Chaco wear a woven band of wool round the head, and especially prize those ornamented with the feathers of a comparatively rare bird. They also practise the boring of the ears and the distending of the lobe to an enormous size, in order to insert ear-discs of light wood. On some maps the Indians in the neighbourhood of the Lenguas are designated "Orejones," on account of this custom of wearing wooden ear-discs. Both these ornaments were highly prized by the Peruvians.

Among the superstitions of the Chaco Indians, I mention three which seem to point to a Peruvian origin. They appeal to the moon in matters of marriage, and the moon was held by

the Peruvians to be the sister-wife of the sun. Secondly, the Indians greatly fear the rainbow when seen in the West, and the armorial ensign of the Incas was the rainbow. In the third place, referring to their superstitions connected with the Pleiades, Dobrizhoffer writes: "They [the Peruvians] may have taught the inhabitants [of the Chaco] a religious observance of the Pleiades."

The Indians assert that many years ago one of their large tribes was ruled by a woman, the last of her family, and that this family originally came from far beyond the mountains in the North-West. It appears that she was treated with great respect, and that she rode on a chestnut horse, led by two men on foot. I have never heard of any other case in the least similar to this —that is, of any of their Chiefs ever assuming such regal state, or of ruling over more than one clan of a tribe, except in the case of a war-chief in time of war. Among the Lenguas there is a distinct trace of a superior people running in a north-westerly direction towards Peru, of fairer skin, finer features, greater intelligence, and of more self-reliant and aggressive character. The result of inquiries into the family connections of the people along this north-westerly line is that they all originated from the same stock, and among them I have found traditions and beliefs which do not seem to be generally held by the tribes. It was from this people that I first won true and loyal friends, and from them we obtained our first converts to Christianity. We found, too, that the recruits we gained from them were much the ablest and most vigorous teachers of that religion.

Among the general mass of the Indians there is no clearly defined idea as to the future abode of their dead, but I have been told by representatives of the more intelligent people to whom I have just referred, that the souls of their departed pass over in a west-north-westerly direction, to what they term the "cities of the dead." These cities they describe as being of considerable size, the houses being of solid material (they think of brick), and formed into streets of great regularity. Now the Indian has had no means of realizing what a permanently built town is, except what he has seen in Paraguay proper, but I have

never heard of the remotest idea being prevalent that deceased Indians had any connection with Eastern peoples or cities. The Lengua has been a nomad for generations, and there is no sign in their country of their ever having built any permanent dwelling. The Indian's belief is that the souls of the deceased continue to live in the spirit-world much the same life as they did when in the body. How comes it, then, that he should imagine that the soul should adopt in the after-life a mode of living of which he has had no experience in this life? But just as he holds firmly to the clan and tribal life, and avoids all connection with peoples differing from himself in language and blood, so he believes that the souls naturally seek out their friends and ancestors, and thus continue, as it were, the national life in shade-land. For the soul, therefore, to seek a home so utterly different from that of the deceased can only be accounted for by the fact that his ancestors must have lived at one time in such cities. The soul of the Lengua Indian, in order to reach these cities, must perforce pass over many intervening tribes quite distinct from his own, and regarded by him as potential enemies. How, therefore, can we account for this belief, unless we assume that these Indians were at some remote period connected with the ancient cities of Peru and Bolivia, and that they have an indistinct tradition of the land from which they originally came? It may possibly be that these particular Lenguas are the descendants of Inca troops which had been stationed on the Chaco frontier, or perhaps Peruvians who had fled from the Spaniards, and entered the Chaco from that direction.

The formation of the Chaco is such that no mines of any description could be found there; but these Lenguas have a distinct tradition that away on the frontier, far distant from their own country, and in a land occupied by a tribe unknown to them, there exists a passage cut in the rocks which penetrates some distance into the hillside, and in which some valuable treasure lies hidden. They have described minutely to me the characteristics of the country around this excavation, and also the height and breadth of the passage, and the manner in which it was made. It appears that within living memory some

A NORTH-WEST TYPE OF LENGUA

The angular features and more intellectual face point to the probable Inca origin of the north-west clans.

A SOUTHERN TYPE OF LENGUA

Showing the more degraded features, distinct from those of the north-west. The feather head-dress—the most valuable Lengua ornament—is supposed to act as a charm, when fishing, against the swamp "Kilyikhama."

LENGUA BOYS

At the "wainkya" feast, when a boy is initiated to manhood and becomes a warrior, his state is henceforth indicated by the binding of the forelock with red wool, after the manner of a stiff paint-brush, into which a feather ornament is inserted. The shell necklace of mother-of-pearl appearance is formed from the swamp mussel shell. Bead ornaments are extensively worn by youths.

Indians penetrated to that place, and that three entered the secret passage, but never returned. The Indians told me that they were killed by spirits guarding the treasure, and that since then none of them have ventured to repeat the experiment. They maintain great secrecy upon this subject, and I have been the only one to whom they have disclosed it; but even to me they have not indicated the road or the exact position. In all probability the three adventurers were suffocated by the pent-up gases.

The interesting point, however, in this story is not the question of a hidden treasure, but that these Indians, who have lived in a low swampy region for many generations, and who never travel far from their own district for fear of their enemies, should retain such a vivid and clear account of a gallery cut by hand in a rocky region several hundred miles from their home. This excavation does not appear to have been so much a mine as a place tunnelled out for the reception of treasure, and we know that the Peruvians at the time of the Conquest carried off and secreted their treasure wherever possible, in order that they should not fall into the hands of the rapacious Spaniards. Unless some of these Indians had at one time been acquainted with the Peruvians, and had perhaps formed part of those who fled to the Chaco fastnesses at the time of the Conquest, how is it possible to account for these Indians having this tradition at the present day?

A Peruvian legend says that white and bearded men, coming from Lake Titicaca at a remote period, ruled over and civilized the natives of the land. A similar tradition existed among the Aztecs of Mexico, which said that Quetzalcoatl came from the East, bringing like blessings to the inhabitants, and becoming their deity. Among the Chaco Indians there are also traditions of a strange and wonderful people yet to come. A Lengua named Poit, who had travelled widely, and who was considered by us to be the most intelligent of the Indians, communicated to me a version which he said he had received from a very old wizard in the far West when he was dying. The latter had heard of our arrival and doings among the Eastern Lenguas, and he

closely questioned Poit about us, telling him that there was a tradition of their people which said that in the days to come a few strange foreigners would arrive among them, not Indians, but yet speaking their language; that they would reveal to them the mysteries of the spirit world, and make them a great people. But he added that if any harm should befall these foreigners at the hands of the Indians, dire calamity would ensue, and the Indian tribes would cease to exist. He called the expected foreigners the Imlah, which is certainly not a Lengua word, but is evidently of foreign origin.

Can it be that our early successes with the Lenguas may be somewhat attributable to the influence of this tradition? The Indians, however, are very reticent on this subject, and, when questioned, profess to know nothing at all about it. It is quite clear that we must appear to the Indian to fulfil very nearly this old prophecy, and it is equally clear that if they accepted it they would be bound, according to its statements, to obey us in all things. This, of course, would interfere with their natural pleasures and inclinations, the power of their witch-doctors would be destroyed, and they would be forced to adopt new and unwelcome habits and customs. It is remarkable that, before we were able to impart Christian teaching to them, numbers actually respected and obeyed us, and the attitude of the whole people towards us was quite different from that shown to the ordinary foreigner. Since Christianity has taken a hold on them, they naturally set aside these old wives' fables, and look upon everything from a higher standpoint. But that the heathen should attempt to cloud over this old tradition is very reasonable, for the acceptance of it, as has been shown, would not be agreeable to them.

Naturally, the whole subject of the origin of these peoples is based on very slight foundations of tradition, and, as the people possess no written records, no monuments, ruins, rock-paintings, or *quipus* to refer to, any theory must necessarily depend largely on supposition. My own opinion is that we have sufficient reasonable evidence to warrant us in believing that there is a decided strain of Peruvian blood in the Chaco peoples.

CHAPTER VI

PRIMITIVE INDIAN LIFE

In order to understand Indian life, it is first of all necessary to form an idea of the kind of country which these people inhabit and the climatic conditions under which they live. This does not necessitate a knowledge of the actual geographical boundaries, geological formation, and other natural features; but when we read of forests and vast palmy plains, of the rivers and park-like country of the western portion, we must not be led away by the common delusion that all is beautiful, romantic, and delightful, and that, in the words of the hymn, "Every prospect pleases, and only man is vile." The fact is that in the Chaco Boreal almost every prospect displeases, and the only really interesting and bearable thing in the country is man, savage, wild, primitive, and heathen as he is.

The Indian is perfectly suited to his environment; even his picturesque costume and the ornamental painting with which he adorns his body is in perfect harmony with his surroundings. The colours blend so beautifully that there is no doubt whatever that the Indian has, in a very great degree, the idea of fitness and harmony. In order, therefore, to depict the country in which he lives, let us take one or two localities as illustrations, and try, by means of a few word-pictures, to present some typical scenes to the reader's eye.

The first is an Indian village, situated on a piece of open land. At a little distance to the north flows a sluggish river, the current so slight as to be almost imperceptible. The banks are thickly covered with weeds, bulrush and papyrus rising high above the rest, and dense masses of floating water-lilies

spread out at the roots of the trees. Dark tree-trunks which have drifted down in flood-time rise here and there out of the water like huge, ugly reptiles. The stream, which is in reality about 50 feet wide, can only be recognized by a little clear water free from weeds in the centre. Close to the bank is a fringe of palm-trees, which rear their tall branchless stems 40 feet or more into the air, crowned by a single head of green, fan-like leaves. The remains of last season's brilliant green crowns droop below in a cluster of dead leaves. A few shady trees are dotted here and there, which form a welcome contrast to some headless palms and dead stumps—killed by the destructive palm-beetle. On these gaunt stems lazy water-fowl are perched, calmly viewing the scene around them. In the water an occasional splash is heard as a sluggish fish jumps at a water-insect or seeks to escape from a fierce foe beneath Here and there what seems a dead black log is visible, but what in reality is an alligator asleep, or slowly moving among the reeds.

To the south, about a mile from the village, stretches a line of dense, dark forest, with small clumps of trees and copses lying between. To the east lies a long stretch of low, damp, grass-covered ground, thickly studded with fan-leaf palms. The grass, unlike that of an English meadow, is tall and rank, and winding among the palm-trees can be seen a single track worn by the feet of men. To the west stretches an immense ant-hill plain, covering fifteen thousand acres or more of very low land, with two or three inches of water lying upon it, a few palms, and only an occasional clump of trees. A dreary waste is this, thickly studded with ant-hills, three, four, and even five, feet in height, of great hardness, and inhabited by teeming millions of industrious ants. A clear blue sky, without a cloud, spreads as a canopy above this scene, and a blazing sun pours down its fiery rays, while the air resounds with the croak of frogs, the screech of water-fowl, and the buzz of myriads of insects.

The Indian village close at hand consists of two lines of the most primitive dwellings imaginable, constructed simply of boughs of trees fixed into the ground, which are interlaced together, and covered with grass and palm-leaves loosely thrown

LENGUA VILLAGES

Two distinct types of shelter are hastily erected The dome-shaped "Toldo" of branches, grass, and palm-leaves is roughly thatched to the ground on the south side—the stormy quarter. The reed-matting "Toldo" is so regulated as a protection either from the sun or storms.

on. This rude shelter keeps out the torrid rays of the sun, and to some extent the tropical rains. Little space is allowed to the family sheltering beneath. The furniture consists of a few household utensils of the most primitive description, and skins, which serve as seats by day and beds by night. The simple weapons of the savage rest near, or are stuck into the grass roof above. The household fires of wood smoulder a yard or so in front of each shelter. Women sit here and there gently swinging a baby in its string hammock or industriously spinning. One is to be seen seated at a loom, made of four branches of a tree, weaving a blanket for the master of the house. The other women sit in little groups, passing round the pipe, and gossiping over the news of the day.

There is nothing sad or dull in this little assembly; with bright, cheerful faces they are enjoying their simple life perhaps more keenly for the moment than their more highly-cultivated and civilized sisters. Two or three old men are about; one of extreme age is sitting cross-legged on his mat, apparently thinking of nothing. Troublesome stinging flies are buzzing round his naked body, which he occasionally flicks off with a piece of hide fastened to the end of a thin stick, which enables him to reach those which try to settle on remote parts of his back. A few children—very few, it must be admitted—disport themselves around the booths in Nature's garb. As it is mid-day, the few sheep and goats are resting here and there in the shade lazily chewing the cud. The men and lads are out hunting, some in the forest for the honey, of which the people are so fond, and which they collect in skin bags—comb, larvæ, young bees, and all. Others are out on the great ant-hill plain in pursuit of the ostrich or the deer, while the rest are to be seen in the distance by the river-bank with hook and line, the hand-net or the fish-trap, and some even with bow and arrow, seeking for the large fish that play in the shallow waters.

Now let us watch them after the sun has set. The scene has entirely changed. The flies, the pest of the daytime, have disappeared, but their place has been taken by thick swarms of mosquitos, which make life intolerable even to Indians, though

they are somewhat kept in check by the clouds of smoke rising from the fires placed to windward. All are now busy cooking or eating, for they have partaken of little food throughout the day. The fires are fed anew, and throw a glare around, which lights up the forms of these strangely attired and painted savages, with their white ostrich-feathers gracefully waving to and fro. The dense forest in the background, with the stately heads of the palms silhouetted against the clear tropical sky, brilliant with stars, completes the picture, which words are inadequate to describe.

How different a few weeks hence! A visitor to this village will find it abandoned, only the charred skeletons of the booths remaining to tell the tale that a death has taken place, and that, for fear of the spirit of the departed, the people have fled to a less uncanny spot, where they will be free from ghostly visitants.

The scene is changed to a great swamp, with little islands dotted about, and on one of these stands a similar Indian village. But here the surroundings are very different from those described in the last picture. The village is near the edge of the swamp, which is fully twenty miles in length and from one to four miles in width. The water on the average is waist-deep, but in places the traveller is forced to swim, and this with great difficulty, owing to the matted and tangled vegetation. The bulrush and papyrus are found everywhere, and dozens of other water-plants are interlaced in an impenetrable mass, some of which are thorny and lacerate the flesh. Progress is impossible in this swamp, except along the narrow paths which have been made by the natives. Once off the high ground and in the swamp, the tall reeds, towering on all sides high above one's head, make it utterly impossible to see anything but the sky, and here the uninitiated would soon lose their way. Neither is travel in such a wilderness altogether free from danger. Large water snakes, and not infrequently alligators, are to be found, and occasionally even venomous snakes are met with, coiled up on the matted undergrowth, their forms, owing to the similarity of the colours, being hardly distinguishable from the vegetation.

The island is quite unlike the mainland—no open grass plain,

no dense forest, but thick undergrowth and scrubby trees, with a fringe of palms encircling the whole. Here, after making a clearing, the Indians find it profitable to plant their gardens, for it is one of the few spots possessing a rich soil, and the vicinity of the swamp supplies them with an abundance of fish and waterfowl. Nor are they averse from dining upon the large water-snakes. Naturally, from the position of this village, the insect pests are infinitely worse than in the one last described, but the facility of obtaining food is a great consideration. Such a place is dreary in the extreme, and especially on cold, cloudy, and wet days, when the poor inhabitants huddle together or crouch for warmth over their fires, seemingly bereft of all life and energy.

My last picture is that of a country covered with dense forest, where there are few open spaces, and these of small extent. A village, similar to the two already mentioned, is situated in one of these small open plots. A tragedy is being enacted here, for smallpox of a very virulent type has seized upon this little isolated party of our fellow-creatures. One by one they are stricken down, and can be seen lying helpless on the ground where they have fallen, and on the surrounding trees are perched the heralds of death, clusters of grim-looking vultures, only biding their time, and adding terror to the sufferers below. A death takes place, and is followed by the cruel customs attendant upon heathenism. Grief, deep and real, lies in the hearts of the bereaved relatives. Those whom they have loved—and they can love—have been taken from them. One by one they see them laid away out of sight in the dark forest, till few are left behind. To them there is no hope of a happy future in the hereafter, no idea of the resurrection of the body. The only future that they do believe in is that of a shade-land, dark, mysterious and forbidding. It is a heart-rending scene to witness four Indians, already stricken with the fell disease, and in a weak state, tottering under the burden of a dead comrade whom they are bearing to the forest for burial. First one, then another, falls down exhausted, only to return to his burden to fall again, and this for the last time. Still more heart-rending is it to see one of the few lingering survivors, a mother, lying prostrate in the

last stages of the disease. A few yards away is the dead unburied body of her infant child, surrounded by vultures fighting for their prey, while she, having in desperation roused herself, is feebly and in vain throwing at them any missile within her reach.

How often do we hear even travellers asserting that it is a pity to attempt to alter the lives of these happy children of Nature, who know no care, no anxiety, and who, if left to themselves, would lead a happy butterfly existence. To the casual observer they may appear to lead a careless, simple and thoughtless life; but to the few, the very few, who have actually for years lived their life with them in all its phases, and understand it in its inmost intricacies, to them only is the real state of things known.

To the Indian this world is no Utopia, and he requires the hope of a better life as much as the most wretched, degraded, and hopeless of our submerged populations in Europe. I frequently wonder how men who only pay a flying visit to such a people, and who never stop to study the tribes, their language, or their condition, can write and talk with calm authority upon a subject which demands from anyone who would form a true estimate and opinion almost a life-time of patient research. The wild animals of the forest, the evil, slimy denizens of the swamps and rivers, are little or nothing to these children of Nature. The terror that haunts them by day and night is that of the spiritual, the powers of demons, the dread of the future. The Indian is, above all things, reticent about his views of the spirit-world, but in reality it is an all-absorbing subject to him. It is only when his confidence has been won that he will discuss with you the question of the after-life.

But now, after this digression, let us return to the present life. The Indian is a nomad, unable to remain long in any one place, for he is driven by resistless forces from one part of the country to another. The seasons are never certain; for nearly two years at a stretch I have known vast regions almost waterless. Consequently the game are compelled to seek in distant parts for the little water that is left, and the Indian perforce

must follow it. Gardens cease to produce harvests, the swamps and rivers are dry, and fish are unobtainable. Various kinds bury themselves deep in the mud at the approach of drought. Eggs are deposited, and not till much-wished-for rains fall do they once more spring into life, multiply rapidly, and teem as formerly.

But it is not only the necessity of obtaining a livelihood that forces the Indian to wander. He is driven, as it were, by a restless spirit, the result of generations of hard and peculiar circumstances fixing a habit upon him which becomes second nature, and he finds it impossible, even when not impelled by necessity, to remain long in any one place. And a power as great as the necessity of providing for his physical needs is the dread of ghosts and spirits. As soon as a place becomes haunted he must move. He is, however, not altogether morose, or prone to despondency and sadness. On the contrary, he is extremely sociable, and as the sons of Job the Patriarch went to and fro feasting in each other's houses, so the Indian, when opportunity occurs and food is obtainable, delights to move from clan to clan, feasting and making merry. The children, the few there are, enjoy life as all children do, and in their games they closely resemble the little ones at home. The feelings and instincts of the Indian are thoroughly human, with this advantage, that he is more simple, has no veneer, and is probably on the whole less hypocritical than his more cultured brethren in other lands.

Unless something stirring is on in the village, such as a feast or a ghost scare, or visitors or sickness, the Indian generally retires to rest between 9 and 10 p.m. His preparations are of the simplest. He makes up the fire, pulls his skin mat towards it, and, joining three or four mats together with a palm-log at one end for a pillow, he lies down without any change of garment or other preparations; and if the night is cold or the mosquitos particularly bad, he tucks his feet up under his blanket, covers his face with it also, and in a few minutes is sound asleep.

Unless it is raining, they invariably sleep out in the open, with nothing but the blue vault of heaven above them. They

do not, however, slumber steadily the whole night through, as we do, but rise at intervals, sit up at the fire, light a pipe, and have a chat, and then retire to sleep again. The necessity for keeping the fires constantly going requires that someone should be about. They also feel the need during the night of some refreshment—a pound or so of meat, or a couple of boiled fish.

Another reason for this restlessness is undoubtedly the necessity of being continually on guard against danger Although I have for years from preference journeyed by night to avoid the hot sun, I have never yet succeeded in entering a village when no one was about. The dogs, of course, oftentimes numbering three to every Indian, give instant alarm ; but, as all night through they are fighting with each other, rushing off and barking at some passing fox or wolf, or howling when they hear the distant roar of a jaguar, they are not to be depended upon as discreet watch-dogs; the Indian could never be warned of the approach of man from the alarm of dogs alone. These animals are certainly very useful at night in keeping off foxes, tiger-cats, and such creatures. They also give the alarm by making a peculiar noise when they scent either the jaguar or the puma, the only two animals which they really fear. They are the friends of man, indeed, but the Indian is certainly not particularly their friend. They generally have to struggle for their own existence, and are so perpetually hungry that you dare not leave your saddle gear, boots, or belt within their reach. The only notice taken of them by their masters is a blow, a kick, or a piece of fire-brand hurled at them. The Indian, however, will never kill his dogs, out of respect for their spirits. The Chaco dog is of no particular breed ; you find them of all sizes, colours, and descriptions, but all are thin, and more than half-starved, savage, and very treacherous.

Having found, then, that the dogs prove unreliable sentinels, the natives themselves feel bound to keep a watch upon their own safety. An attacking party has to exercise the greatest possible caution and craft in approaching an Indian encampment. Beyond the ordinary disturbances to the peace of the village, dreams perhaps play the most prominent part in disturbing

the quiet of night. In the dead silence suddenly up starts a man with a cry, and, proceeding to rattle his gourd and chant a dismal tune, he seeks to scare off the spirit which has disturbed his slumbers. Nocturnal life, therefore, in an Indian village, although it seems so picturesque, strange, and romantic, must not be regarded as without its drawbacks. Occasionally a venomous snake will intrude its unwelcome presence among the sleepers, and sometimes Indians have died from the bite of such visitants. A wolf, the great solitary maned wolf of the Chaco, will, in spite of the dogs, venture so close as to cause a start to the freshly awakened sleeper, who sees its gaunt form in the dim light, perhaps not more than twenty yards off.

But the discomforts of an Indian "toldo" (hut), especially at night, do not lie so much in the greater dangers as in the smaller pests. Fleas especially swarm at seasons, and little rest is then obtained. The traveller turns restlessly from side to side, and one can quite imagine the discomfort when his share of these troublesome insects is perhaps not less than one hundred and fifty for the night. This is no exaggeration, because actual observation has been made, and I am perfectly sure that I am putting it at the lowest computation. Not only are the mosquitos in themselves more than a sufficient plague, but the Indian is also afflicted by the *garapata* or tick, which frequently causes a painful sore lasting for months. The sand-flies, too, some of them so small as hardly to be perceptible with the naked eye, are exceedingly irritating. Only mosquito-nets of calico will keep out these minute insects; an ordinary open-mesh net would be useless.

The reader can perhaps realize what it is to endeavour to sleep in such a climate, with the thermometer as high as 90° Fahr. even at night, under a low net of material as thick and close as an ordinary handkerchief. And this net, perhaps the greater of two evils, the Indian in his primitive life does not possess. I have often been aroused by a sort of stampede of the sheep and goats, who, being irritated by the insects, or alarmed by the fighting of the dogs, were rushing in and out among the booths,

and more than once I have been awakened by my net being charged, to see the head of an old billy-goat looking into my face and the mosquitos entering in swarms at the gap he had made.

When there is no moon, the Indians depend almost entirely on the glow of their fires for light, but they also make torches of palm-leaves, which give a bright light for the short time they last. Occasionally they improvise rough candles of wax, which give but a faint and flickering light. The *palo santo* tree, which is to be found in some parts of the country, contains a large amount of resin, and a piece of it put upon the fire will burn up with a bright flame, and give a more lasting light; neither does it require fanning or other attention.

It may be gathered from this brief and cursory glance at the Indians' primitive existence that it is by no means "the simple life" he is often credited with living. Many more of its phases are dealt with in subsequent chapters, but I do not propose to exhaust the subject in this book, for there is much that for obvious reasons cannot possibly be published.

A DECORATED WOODEN WHISTLE WORN ROUND THE NECK.

CHAPTER VII

ARTS AND INDUSTRIES

The conditions and circumstances under which the Chaco Indian lives are somewhat peculiar, and do not tend to make an industrious people. The climate is in many ways trying and enervating; flood and drought alternate with but few intervals of normal weather; the insect pests make life at times almost intolerable; the country produces practically nothing of workable value; for hundreds of miles to the north, south, and west stretch tracts of undeveloped country in the hands of tribes quite as primitive as the Lenguas, and the road to civilization on the east is closed by the River Paraguay, which has been for centuries a line of demarcation between the Chaco tribes and the Paraguayans, mutual fear or distrust perhaps more than hostility preventing communication between the two. These hindrances, together with the Indians' nomadic habits, their Socialism, and many other characteristics, are sufficient to account for the paucity of Chaco industries on any large scale.

It must not be thought from these remarks that the Indians are a lazy people. Judging them from their own standpoint and the primitive life they lead, with its proportionately few demands and its many difficulties, I feel justified in saying that they are an industrious race. Time is certainly no object with them, and little system is observed in their daily routine, but from their lack of resources, and the crude tools and implements at their disposal, much time is necessarily spent, and great patience has to be exercised, in providing for their few daily wants.

Therefore, in forming a fair estimate of their work, the trying

conditions under which they labour must be taken into account. Hunting, for example, which is the chief occupation of the men, is by no means a pastime or recreation, but a serious, onerous, and often dangerous undertaking. It is indeed a great task of endurance, for they have to spend hours in search of game, exposed to a tropical sun and myriads of poisonous insects, at one time wading in swamps, their flesh cut and torn by the long, spiny and razor-edged grass, at another cutting their way through dense and thorny undergrowth in the forests.

The women are by no means drudges, as is so often the case amongst aborigines, although they might appear so to the superficial observer; in reality, the men do their fair share of the work, but it is not seen to such advantage as that of the women.

In describing the various processes employed in their industries, I will confine myself to the most important, and those likely to be interesting to the reader.

The longest and most tedious work which falls to the lot of an Indian woman is that of producing a blanket for her husband, which constitutes his only garment, and is made entirely of wool. Sheep are scarce and of poor quality, owing to the flat and swampy nature of the country, and as the Indian is not given to thrift, he often falls back on his small flock to supply any shortage of rations.

Shearing is done in a crude manner with an ordinary knife. The process of washing the wool is very simple: the fleeces are placed upon platforms of palms or upon bushes, where they are left until sufficiently cleansed by the rain and bleached by the sun. The women are careful to pick out all knots and other irregularities before spinning. When this is accomplished, they spread the fleece out on reed matting, and sit down tailor-wise to their work. First the wool is teased out into a long hank, which is wound round the right wrist and passed over the forefinger. A portion is regulated to a certain thickness, and then attached by a knot to a spindle, consisting of a thin, straight piece of hard wood, the pointed end of which is passed through a small gourd. The strand of wool between the forefinger and

SECTION OF A LENGUA WOOLLEN BLANKET

The only male attire. The whole process of manufacture is the work of the women, and the result is remarkable considering the primitive materials at their disposal. Various designs are introduced denoting snakes' skins, palms, cross-roads, etc., and in some cases there is a striking resemblance to Inca designs—pointing to the possible origin of the Lenguas.

BLANKET WEAVING

The most primitive loom in the world. Two forked uprights and two horizontal branches. Upon this crude frame woollen blankets of very even and fine texture are woven.

the knot is spun by giving the spindle a sharp twist, and allowing it to turn in the air or on a smooth pigskin, the woman meanwhile removing all irregularities until an even thickness is obtained. She repeats the process until her spindle is full, occasionally rubbing her fingers with wood ashes. After the spun thread has been wound into a ball for convenience, two or more strands are respun to the required thickness.

They dye their wool in order to introduce patterns into their weaving. Black and white are obtained from the natural wool. Reds are procured from the cochineal insect and from the bulb of a small crocus-like flower, which yields a deep ruby colour. Various barks afford yellows and browns, but greens and blues are not found.

The loom is of a most primitive description, formed by placing two forked branches in the ground in an upright position. A cross-pole is fixed in the forks above, and another is tied below near the ground, barely sufficient space being allowed for the ball of yarn to pass between—indeed, a hole is usually scooped in the ground for this purpose. As the woman sits on the ground, she can just reach to drop the ball of wool over the top pole and catch it as it falls; she then passes it underneath the lower one, and repeats the operation till the warp is finished. The threads are placed closely side by side, much care being taken in forming regular lines of coloured wool to produce the chosen pattern. By an ingenious contrivance of loops of wool, which pass across the entire face of the warp in a continuous line and pick up each alternate strand, the weaver is able to separate them, and pass a fine cane between the divided threads. The shuttle is the ball of wool, which is passed between the warp threads as far as can be conveniently reached. The woof thread is then battened down into place with a short, smooth-pointed stick. This is done in sections of about twelve inches at a time, until the whole face of the web has been traversed. On this crude loom a web 7 feet 6 inches × 6 feet 6 inches can be produced.

Various patterns are introduced into the coloured warp, such as checks, circles, angles, the legs of the jabiru, and designs

in imitation of snakes' skins. Considering the poorness of the Indian's arithmetical capabilities, these devices are very regularly carried out. Districts have their distinctive patterns or colour, and it is easy to recognize the locality from which a visitor comes by his blanket.

Woollen waist-belts, satchels, head-bands, bracelets, and, in an adjoining tribe, sleeveless shirts are woven on a smaller loom. The Suhin and Tóóthli tribes, in the Western Chaco, are noted for the fine texture of their blankets, which are difficult to procure, a mare or a gun being generally asked in exchange for one.

Cotton is seldom used by the Lenguas as a substitute for wool, but it is more largely found among the tribes further west and north.

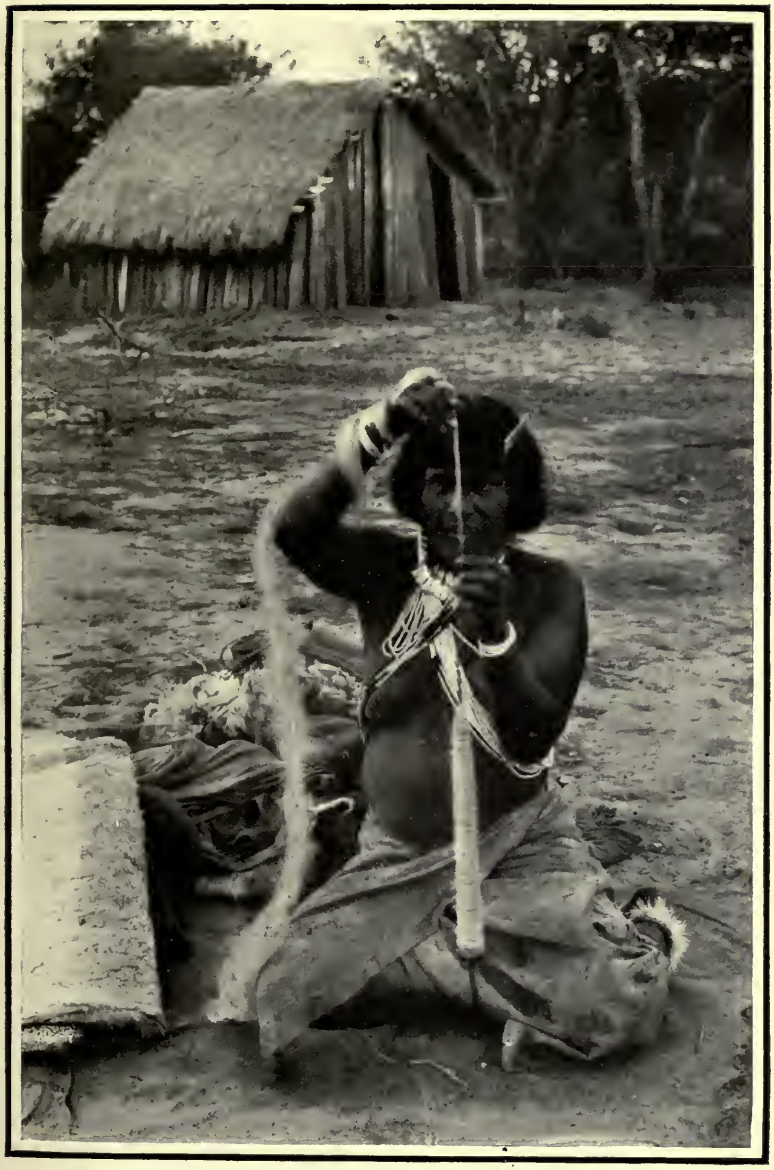
String, which is obtained from the fibres of the *caraguata* plant, is made up into satchels, large net-bags, waist-bags, and hammocks. Two species of the plant are resorted to, some preferring the long fibres of one variety, others those of a shorter one. The fibre is separated by being tightly run to and fro through a loop of string, which takes off the outer sheathing of the leaves, and afterwards it is tied in bunches and dried in the sun.

The spinning is done on the naked thigh, the number of strands varying according to the purpose of the thread. The fine string used in netting and satchel-making consists of only two strands. For stronger articles three strands are rolled together, each of which is made of three smaller ones.

The string is dyed in many colours, and the patterns introduced are various and intricate. The best specimens are to be found in the sleeveless shirts worn in the West, which serve as armour in tribal wars. The texture is very close considering the nature of the material, and, being of a raised and ribbed formation, it offers a fair resistance to a slanting arrow-head.

Bone and hard-wood needles are used in bag-making; but netting is accomplished without the aid of a mesh-stick, the finger and thumb taking its place.

Both sexes employ themselves in making the string but the



LENGUA WOMAN SPINNING WOOL FOR A BLANKET

The thin spindle-stick of hard wood with a small gourd at the base is the only instrument employed in the process.

manufacture of the articles is, like blanket-making, exclusively the women's work.

The only garment worn by a woman is a skin petticoat, except in the very cold weather, when she wraps her whole body in a large mantle, made by sewing together a number of skins, either of the nutria (a species of otter), sheep, small deer, or fox, wearing it with the hairy side next to the body. The petticoat is sufficiently large to reach one and a half times round the hips, and falls to a little below the knees. The double fold runs down the front, and a woollen belt serves to fasten it. In the rough conditions of Indian life, these skirts, being washable, are particularly serviceable garments, and wear for many years. They are made from the skins of goats, sheep, or the smaller deer, and the longer they are worn the softer they become.

They are not tanned, and the process of manufacture is a tedious one, owing to the primitive nature of Indian appliances. After the hair has been scraped off with a pointed stick, the softening is produced by bending the skin over, and pressing the fold firmly down with a sharp snail-shell. The bends are made at distances of about half an inch from each other, in a diagonal pattern across the whole length of the skin, after which the surfaces are rubbed together, and a mixture of wood-ashes and water is applied. Both surfaces of the skin are treated in this way. Two or three hides are then sewn together to form the skirt, and the ends are fringed with patterns worked in red paint.

The whole process is done exclusively by the women, who bestow much time and care in making their own, their husbands' and children's garments, a large blanket often taking four months to complete. What with their many other duties, such as making pottery and fans, cooking, procuring palm-cabbages, roots, and other food supplies, together with the work entailed in constantly moving from place to place, their day is fully occupied.

The man's blanket is a cumbersome garment, and he often discards it in warm weather when sitting in the village or when

engaged in felling a tree, hunting, and other exercises which require freedom of limb. At other times he adjusts his blanket according to his occupation and the temperature. If it is hot, he allows it to fall in a double fold from his waist, where it is either fastened by a belt or by tucking the folds of one corner into the other, the whole falling gracefully to below the knees in the formation of a double skirt. In colder or wet weather the over-skirt is raised to cover the shoulders, and sometimes the head. A belt is often dispensed with, and the blanket wrapped round the body, leaving one shoulder naked, and kept in place by hitching one corner over the other.

Often the only coverings worn by men when hunting is a girdle made from the raw hide of a deer or cow. The band is deep, and cut into a broad fringe which hangs down the loins.

Sandals and leggings are roughly made from raw hide, and are worn by the men when hunting and by the women when gathering fuel in the forest, as a protection against the thorny undergrowth. The heat of the ground is often so great that these sandals are worn when travelling over dry stretches of country.

Raw hides are used extensively as mats, and the softer skins serve as saddles for the women. The skin of the rhea's stomach is made up into large bags for carrying honey, and the neck of the ostrich, jabiru, and alligator is often converted into a tobacco-pouch by sewing up one end and closing up the other by means of a small wooden ring, which is slipped down over the folds. The base is ornamented with woollen tassels or by painting red scorings.

The making of the personal ornaments of the Lenguas may well rank among their industries. Both sexes adorn themselves, but the men far more so than the women. The work is divided between them, the men perhaps doing the larger share.

The feathers used as head ornaments are sometimes strung together and sometimes worn singly, and are often cut into elaborate shapes. The most valued and expensive article of head-dress is a broad red woollen band, to which are sewn diagonal lines, squares or circles of small buttons, cut out from

snails' shells. The top is fringed with bright scarlet feathers taken from the spoon-bill, or flamingo. Some have a woollen chin-strap attached and beaded woollen tassels hanging over the ears. This head-dress is regarded as a charm by the wearer, especially against the evil spirit of the swamps. They are much prized in consequence, and are worn chiefly when visiting, feasting, or during courtship.

The small buttons referred to are of the size of an ordinary shirt-button, with a hole drilled in the centre, and of a very smooth surface, considering that they are fashioned only with a knife, which is as a rule none too sharp, and the whole process done by using the ball of the naked heel as a table. Men can be seen seated cross-legged on the ground, spending hours at a time in this tedious performance.

A necklace is frequently worn, consisting of about six yards of these buttons strung closely together, and certainly containing some hundreds of them—a proof of the patience and perseverance of the maker. These strings of buttons are the money of the people. A necklace such as the above would represent the value of one sheep.

Seeds are sometimes strung into necklaces. One of peculiar formation, made only by the northern Lenguas, is composed of pieces of bone, the legs of a water-fowl, with a few seeds of a water-plant strung between every two bones.

There are various other kinds of necklaces, but two only are worthy of mention. One consists of oblong pieces of fresh-water mussel shells, about an inch in length, with either straight or concave cut edges. Two holes are drilled at one end of each section, to attach it to the neck-string, and half-drilled holes are made at the other end, to form an ornamentation. The surface, when complete, is very similar in appearance to that of mother-of-pearl, and affords a very pleasing effect thrown into relief by the reddish-brown skin of the wearer. The same tedious process is followed by the men in making these ornaments. The women usually wear a necklace made by stringing together a number of sheep's teeth, interspersed with beads. A hole is bored in the fang through which to pass the string.

Wooden ear-discs are worn as ornaments, chiefly by the men. The piercing of the ears, to receive the discs, takes place at no fixed period of a child's life. Some are bored very early, some at a later period. The usual method employed is to pierce the lobes with a sharp thorn or bone needle, afterwards inserting a piece of grass or thin stick, to prevent the wound from closing. As age advances the discs are enlarged; one and a half inches in diameter is the average size, but I have known them in the case of an old man as large as three and a quarter inches in diameter. These discs are worn in the lobe of the ear; the distended skin keeps them in position, and, when taken out, the lobe hangs nearly to the shoulder. The gap is often filled by a coiled strip of palm-leaf, and sometimes the long hair is passed through and tied. The discs are usually made from willow wood, which is very light, and affords a smooth surface. They are without ornamentation, except in the case of the witch-doctors, who decorate them with pieces of polished tin in the shape of stars or crosses, some going as far as to cut pieces of imported mirror to fit them, by means of which they profess to be able to see the shadow of the spirit passing out from or entering into the person on whom they are operating.

Armlets are made out of strips of lamb's skin with the wool on, which are wound round the biceps, their place being sometimes taken by coils of yellow palm-leaf.

No Indian looks fully dressed without the feather anklets. These are made from the wing feathers of a rhea, bound together on a string, and often dyed a pale pink. They are not only worn as an ornament, but are considered a safeguard against snake-bite, as the reptile, in striking at the ankle, may chance to miss the flesh and expend the poison on the feathers. The binding, cutting, and stringing together of ostrich plumes is entirely the work of the men.

The Indians' household utensils and domestic appliances are few and of a very primitive description. Pottery, in the shape of water-jars, cooking-pots, and shallow dishes, is made by the women. Particular attention is paid to the class of clay employed, and in preparing it they use a mixture of old pottery

pounded up. The vessel is formed by the addition of thin rolls of clay to a prepared base, which rests on a bed of skins made slightly concave, and is gently turned round as the operator proceeds. After moistening the edge of the base with water, the clay is rolled out between the hands and laid on the edge, each roll as it is added being smoothed out with the shell of a fresh-water mussel dipped in water to enable it to run smoothly.

When complete the vessel is dried in the sun, and then fired for about an hour by placing it on the ground and piling the fuel round it. No glazing is done, but the vessels are marked with rude and irregular designs while they are still hot, by using birds' quills, chips of holy-wood (*palo santo*), and gums. A few pieces of pottery are ornamented with designs of raised clay, but these are exceedingly rare and of a peculiar shape. Broken pieces of old pottery have been found bearing scorings, as if made by the pressure of the thumb, and are said to be the work of spirits.

Clay pipes are sometimes used, and it seems probable that pipes were originally made of clay, as the word for "earth" and "pipe" is the same. The bowls are, however, generally made of wood, and their forms vary greatly, ranging from the ordinary smooth round piece of wood with a hole bored by means of a pointed knife, to elaborately carved bowls in the form of figures and faces of men, birds, and animals. Sometimes the complete figure is carved out, but generally the head only. The stems are made from the core of a certain cactus, and when the supply of tobacco runs short, the Indians chop up the pipe-stems saturated with nicotine, and smoke them as a substitute.

Tobacco is grown in small quantities in garden patches. The leaves are picked, and while still green are stripped by women from the central rib, and pounded in a hollowed-out palm-stump. The pulp is then made into small round cakes, moistened with saliva and pressed between the hands. They are allowed to bake in the sun until quite hard. A hole is made in the centre of each cake, and several are strung together for convenience. Chewing tobacco is unknown amongst the Lenguas, but nearly all smoke, even the women and children. They

are not heavy smokers, however, as each takes only a few draws before passing it on to his neighbour, and seldom is a pipe smoked throughout by one person.

If a fire is handy, a brand is used to light the pipe, generally by a woman, who takes the first few draws and then passes it to the owner. At other times a light is obtained by friction with two sticks, and occasionally from a flint and steel. The fire-sticks are cut from a tree they call the *hapin*, one peculiarity of which is that from October to March, in a normal season, it flowers every fourteen days. Two sticks are selected, a short one in which notches are cut, and the other longer, with one end sharpened and rounded to serve as a drill. The notched stick is placed upon the blade of a knife or iron arrow-head, and held in position by the operator's foot. The rounded end of the longer stick is then placed in one of the notches, and is worked sharply between the palms of the hands with a downward pressure; the friction causes the soft wood to ignite, and it drops out in a smouldering powder on to the knife. This is immediately dropped into the pipe, or on a prepared tinder of fibre of palm, kept in a horn and covered with a cap cut out of a piece of gourd.

Gourds grow in great abundance in the Chaco, and often to a large size. The natives put them to many uses, chiefly as a substitute for pottery. By cutting them lengthwise in two, and hollowing them out, they are converted into vessels for holding water and food, the half stem forming a ready-made handle. Gourds of a round shape are used as receptacles for fish-hooks, tobacco, needles, beads, and other little belongings. A round section, with a zig-zagged edge, is cut out to make an opening, and on being replaced it acts as a close-fitting lid, being kept in position by a sliding string loop.

Gourds of a certain shape are selected as suitable for the rattles which are used at feasts, and by witch-doctors when exorcising evil spirits and performing other rites connected with their craft. They are hollowed out through a small opening in the tapering stem, and then filled with dry seeds, small shells, beads, or anything that will cause a rattling sound. Some are

made to produce a more musical sound by driving a number of needles to the butt-end through the bulbous sides, which are thus fixed in a rigid position, and produce different notes as they are struck by the seeds when swung to and fro.

The Indian displays his artistic powers by engraving the smooth polished sides of gourds. The figures are, for the most part, those of natural objects and animals, while some are attempts to express his idea of evil spirits. Topographical scenes are also elaborately depicted, roads, by-paths, trees of various kinds, rivers, and villages being introduced.

The Lengua musical instruments are few in number, and are for the most part similar to those used by the neighbouring tribes. They include a small bamboo flute, a whistle made from bones, and a flat wooden whistle worn round the neck as an ornament. This latter is cleverly made, being hollowed out through three small holes which produce the notes. Drums are made by stretching wet skins over cooking pots, and are beaten with thin wooden sticks. The only instrument which produces anything approaching musical sounds is a kind of fiddle. It is of a very crude formation. A palm-log is chopped down to form a wide hollow base with a long arm. The one string consists of a long twist of horse-hair, which is tied to the base and adjusted by a wedge of wood passed through a hole at the top of the arm. A piece of *caraguata* leaf is placed over the mouth of the hollow base, and upon this rests a flat piece of wood for a bridge. The sounds are produced (all in a minor key) by rubbing a small horse-hair bow across the string, and at the same time fingering with the left hand near the top of the arm. Saliva is freely applied to the bow-string to give resonance, and all seem to play the same tune.

Rough spoons are fashioned from goats' horns, the oldest men having the largest. Comparatively few of these are made, small half-gourds or shells being more often used as a substitute.

Before knives of foreign manufacture were introduced, a sharpened bamboo was used, and even to-day a knife made from hard wood is preferred for cutting vegetables.

Combs were originally made by inserting the spines of a palm-

tree into a small piece of split bamboo, the distance between the teeth being regulated by the string binding the sides together. Now, imported combs are imitated, made from cows' horns, the teeth being cut with an old knife converted into a saw.

No images are made, except a few wax representations of animals, which are supposed to act as charms when hunting.

Certain intoxicating liquors are brewed from the *algaroba* bean, honey, maize, and pumpkins, but not in large quantities.

The Indians have no knowledge of writing, but keep a diary by means of a stick about the size of a pencil, closely notched all round. When on the march, each day is marked off by a notch, and in recent years some Indians have been known to paint the Sunday notch in red. Certain marks are made alongside to represent incidents of travel. On producing a diary-stick from his bag, an Indian can retail the events of the past few weeks with accuracy.

Certain roadway signs are met with to inform travellers of any interesting events. At an abandoned village, a sign is often left: a piece of bamboo or a stick is fixed in the ground and inclined in the direction the villagers have taken. A long or short hollow scooped out behind the stick indicates the distance travelled, and if they have gone to a feast a small gourd is placed on the top of the stick, or a bunch of feathers tied to it. A cob of maize and a hank of wool placed on a smaller stick have been known to imply that a sheep would be killed, and maize eaten at the feast. In reading such signs as these, the Indian shows remarkably acute perception.

The natives living on the banks of the River Paraguay make dug-out canoes, but those living inland are content with digging out a bottle-trunk tree when they wish to pass over the swollen swamps and streams. The process in each case is a very tedious one. The only instruments used are a clumsy hard-wood digger and fire-brands.

The principal weapons, both of the chase and of war, are bows, arrows, and a heavy hard-wood club. The bow is generally made from the heart-wood of a certain tree, though a few other

woods are sometimes employed. Among the Lenguas, bending is done by fire, or by chopping into shape with an axe. The ends are cut so as to fall inwards, and when reduced to the required size, the surface is scraped and smoothed by means of a knife. The Lengua bow is round, but those used by tribes to the south-west are flat in shape. The average length is five feet.

The bow-string is made from twisted strips of deer-hide, and is long enough to reach the full length and half-way back again, the end with the extra half being always held at the bottom when shooting.

The arrow-shaft is of cane, from the *caña castilla*, and is three-eighths of an inch in diameter and two feet long. The heads are made from various hard woods, and are round, with long, tapering points. Four barbs are cut on one side only. The arrow, when complete, is three feet long. Thin strips of a vegetable binder are wound round the cane shaft over the socket in which the head is inserted. Two feathers are attached to the arrow in a slightly spiral manner, waxed thread being used to bind them on. The butt-end is also bound, to strengthen the notch. Iron-headed arrows are used by preference, and are made from hoop-iron, which is chipped into shape with the back of a knife, and afterwards filed to produce an edge and point. The head is bound into a wooden holder, and this is inserted into the cane socket. The average length is four and a half inches.

The bow is held vertically, and the string drawn to the right cheek. The shooter holds the butt-end of the arrow between the first and second fingers of his right hand, training the shaft along the forefinger of his left hand. No quiver is used, but the arrows are stuck into the belt. Weapons are exclusively made by the men.

Gardening in a small way is the only form of agriculture in vogue among the Indians, and this has many drawbacks. Suitable soil is only found in small patches here and there, and consequently a man has to walk long distances to his scattered garden-plots. Their principal crops are pumpkins, sweet potatoes, tobacco, maize, and *mandioca*. The last is a starchy root, which

forms the staple food of the Paraguayans. It is eaten boiled or roasted, or is ground into flour for making into cakes.

There is little to encourage gardening on a large scale in the Chaco, for the extremes of drought and flood are detrimental to large crops, and in the event of a good supply the birds, myriads of ants, locusts, and even rats, often destroy the whole of an Indian's hard-earned produce.

The only garden implement employed is a native hoe, resembling in shape a small paddle, with a sharp-pointed blade not more than three inches across. It is made of very hard wood, and is of varying length.

The only other industry worthy of mention is house-building, and this is not a very serious undertaking with the Indian. Two distinct methods are employed, and neither gives a waterproof or weather-proof abode. As they are constantly moving from one hunting-ground to another, or abandoning their villages through sickness, death, or superstition, they naturally do not attempt to build any substantial or permanent dwellings.

One class of shelter is built in a circular form by placing sticks in the ground, and bringing together the upper ends in the shape of a dome. On the top of this the women pile rushes, grass, and palm-leaves, which form a rough thatch covering the structure half-way down. A man cannot stand upright in such an erection, but they are chiefly used as a protection from the sun and storms, and not as living-rooms.

The huts of the Suhin are much higher than those of the Lenguas, and are more regularly thatched. They are covered right down to the ground, a small opening being left for a door, through which a man has to enter on all fours.

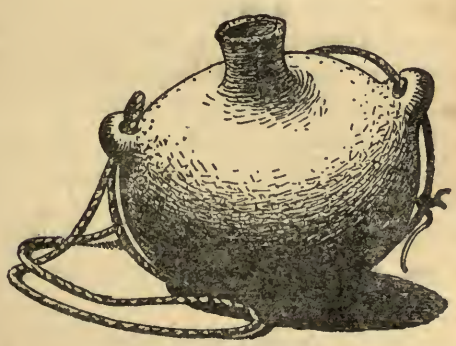
The second class of Lengua shelter consists of reed matting, tied on to a long framework of sticks. The mats are stretched along both sides, and meet at the ridge. In fine weather the ridged-roof form is kept, but should the day prove very hot one side is raised level with the ridge. In the case of wet or windy weather, the roof is dropped down on the weather side to shut off the storm. In villages so built, the mat-houses are arranged in one or more long lines.

LENGUA POTTERY

A Lengua woman completing a clay water-jar. The section in the foreground is a half gourd used as a basin or drinking-vessel.

When the Indians remove to a new site the grass-house is abandoned or more often burnt, but the reed matting is carefully taken down, rolled up, and carried by the women on the top of the bundles comprising all their earthly possessions.

Many of the Chaco industries are slowly dying out as the Indians get more in touch with civilization, and to-day goods of British manufacture are to be found in most Indian villages, even far into the interior.



CLAY WATER-BOTTLE.

CHAPTER VIII

HUNTING

The Chaco being an inland country, it may seem rather a strange assertion that fishing forms one of the chief means of subsistence of the Indians, even among those remote from large rivers. The Chaco is a land of contradictions. I have known it almost impossible to obtain water, except from wells, when at any distance from a permanent river, and that, too, for periods of nearly two years at a stretch. It is not uncommon to ride for miles at a quick trot, and sometimes even at a gallop, over what appears at the time to be prairie-land, but in reality is a swamp bed; and a few months after the rainy season has set in this same land has become a vast swamp, with water in places even five feet deep, the whole covered with reeds and a tangled mass of water plants. This swamp now teems with fish, eels, the famous mud-fish (*Lepidosiren*, see Appendix), and sometimes alligators, while numbers of water-fowl frequent its waters.

The eels and mud-fish have been in hiding throughout the drought a few feet below the surface of the ground. The fish, of which there are many varieties, are bred probably from eggs deposited in the mud before the drought sets in, although some, I believe, like the eels, have the power of surviving the drought. This extraordinary change of conditions must necessarily puzzle the reader who is unacquainted with such possibilities; but the Indian, knowing from experience what he may expect, hastens to pitch his camp in the vicinity of such swamps on the break-up of the dry season, being certain that he will find ready at hand an inexhaustible supply of food

until the next drought sets in, which may not be for some years.

His methods of obtaining this fish-supply are many, and he varies them according to the conditions. In the overgrown parts of the swamp he uses the fishhook, with a very short line, either sitting in a canoe or standing in the water. His hooks are made of bone or wood, although he now often transforms old nails into very serviceable hooks when he is not able to obtain those of European make. In open water, which is never of very great extent, he uses a net. This is home-made, generally three to four feet long, being kept open by two sticks. Stooping down, and holding the lower stick close to the bottom, he draws the net slowly along, and by closing the mouth of the net with the two sticks he secures the fish, transferring them to a net-bag slung on his shoulders.

Running into these swamps are many small streams, which they dam when the swamp begins to fall, and they are able to capture a great quantity of fish with the hands. In larger streams they set fish-traps, made of wicker-work, very similar to a lobster-pot. The bottom is pressed into the mud, allowing the water to be well above the top of the trap, and the fish, having entered, are unable to escape owing to the peculiar formation of the trap. In deeper water, where it is clear, they frequently shoot the larger fish with bow and arrow. For very large fish a longer arrow is used, the point being detachable from the shaft, to which it is fixed by means of string. The floating shaft thus enables them to recover the fish when tired out. They kill the smaller kind, up to the size of a mackerel, by biting the head.

Quite a different method is employed in catching the eel and mud-fish. These they pursue with a thin pointed spear, which can be used only in shallow water. Walking slowly along, they prod the roots of the reeds, and keep a sharp lookout for any slight quiver in the water. This they follow, and, making a thrust from time to time, frequently succeed in spearing one. A good hunter will capture from ten to twelve of these mud-fish in a day, and as each weighs several pounds, he is well rewarded

for his labour, especially as the Indians are very fond of the flesh, and revel in the rich fat.

When the water dries up they search for their holes, and dig out their prey, catching them with their hands. To aid them in this they wear bands of small bones upon the palms, thus enabling them the better to hold the slippery creatures. Occasionally they succeed in capturing a large water-snake (averaging about nine feet in length), and when caught they tie it by the head to their waist-belt, and allow it to drag behind them until they leave the swamp. The flesh is coarse, but the bulk makes up for the lack of quality.

It is generally only in the larger streams that they hunt the alligator, the matted vegetation making it difficult in the swamps. They endeavour to surprise him when basking on the bank, but sometimes they move cautiously along in a canoe, looking out for any that may happen to be asleep among the weeds, killing them with a spear, and lashing them to the canoe in order to bring them to the bank. When alligators are plentiful the Indians enter the water, forming a line across the stream, while a few higher up endeavour to drive them down. This is generally a very successful way of hunting, but extremely dangerous.

On one occasion I had gone out in a canoe to cut poles with which to repair a bullock-cart. These poles were about four inches in diameter. I had secured a few, and was drifting down stream looking for another suitable tree, and on discovering one began to work the canoe through the weeds towards the bank. As I was about to land I was confronted by a large alligator coming down the bank towards me. These creatures generally make for the water, and, seeing no reason to molest him, I threw a handful of weed at him to hasten his movements, when, to my surprise, he showed no inclination to avoid me, but, on the contrary, showed fight, advancing towards me with open jaws. Having no firearm, I thrust the blade of the paddle into his mouth, but this he crushed as if it were matchwood. Seeing how much he enjoyed the paddle, I thought I would give him something more substantial, so, taking up one of the poles,

A Bottle-trunk Tree

The bark is very hard and thorny, but the heart is soft and pithy—eminently suited for hollowing out to serve as a dug-out canoe. The tree produces a beautiful lily flower, and the seed-pods contain a quantity of silk-like substance.

A Lengua Roadway Sign

The stick denotes that a party of Indians have gone in the direction it leans towards, which is further emphasised by grooves cut in the ground. They have gone to a feast, indicated by the bunch of feathers. The smaller stick with a fleece of white wool and a cob of maize shows that a sheep will be killed and eaten, together with maize.

and awaiting my opportunity, I thrust it with all my force into his gaping throat. He was now powerless; but not wishing to leave him thus to suffer, I hammered it further into his body with another pole, until it passed through him. He was now safe to land, and, having collected the timber I wanted, I fixed the painter behind the fore-feet of the alligator, and towed it to my camp. The Indians were greatly amused at my novel way of capturing this reptile, but heartily welcomed this addition to their larder.

Fishing is not altogether void of risk, the unseen dangers being really much more formidable than any encounter with an alligator or large water-snake. The sting-ray fish, for example, lies hidden in the mud of the swamps, and especially of the larger streams. When trodden upon by the fisher, it retaliates by thrusting its powerful sting (rising as a fin from the back) into his foot, sometimes penetrating from the sole right through the instep. This causes not only intense suffering, but has been known to result in serious complications, and even death. A less dangerous but more common foe is a small fish with very sharp teeth, capable of biting through thin wire. It frequently attacks the fisher, taking away a piece of his flesh.

In the swamps, lying upon the tangled vegetation, poisonous snakes are sometimes to be found whose bite in some instances proves fatal to the natives. The danger is increased by their not being easily distinguished from the surrounding vegetation. I myself have had several very narrow escapes. On one occasion, when I was clearing a passage through a swamp, and bending down to cut at the roots of the undergrowth, one of these snakes struck at me, but an Indian standing by dealt it a blow just in time with his bush-knife.

During the wet season, when birds abound in the swamps, the natives obtain a welcome change of food. They resort to many devices in bird-catching, the most interesting of which are those they employ in capturing the young which are unable to fly or birds roosting in trees, and in catching a species of large stork—the jabiru. Towards evening, arming themselves with bundles of short sticks, the Indians enter the swamp, and, encircling a

number of young birds swimming or fluttering over the surface of the water, kill them by blows from the sticks. Sometimes the hunters will hide in a clump of weed, and, moving it with them, will cautiously advance upon the unsuspecting birds, and, occasionally diving underneath them, catch them by the legs. When a tree has been noted in which the birds roost at night, the hunters sally forth after dark armed with sticks, and, creeping up cautiously, surround the tree. The sleepy birds fall easy victims to their deadly aim.

The jabiru, being a bird standing five feet high, affords an easier target and a more substantial meal. On noting their feeding-ground and the course they take in flying to their sleeping quarters, the Indians take up their positions at intervals along the course. At sunset the birds, one by one, fly off to their distant sleeping-ground, and at a height of some forty feet their long bodies afford a fairly easy target to the practised eye of the Indian, who is an adept at throwing a stick when the bird is immediately above him.

But they are able to secure larger numbers at night, when they attack the whole flock. Waiting until the moon sets, the Indians start out in the darkness, armed not only with sticks, but each carrying a palm-leaf torch. The unsuspecting birds, perched on ant-hills, are surrounded, and at a given signal each Indian lights his torch and rushes on the bird he has singled out. In the general commotion they fall an easy prey, being too confused in their drowsy state with the glare from the torches to show fight, as they are quite capable of doing at other times.

Riding early one morning along the edge of a swamp, accompanied by an Indian, I noticed a large stork close by. My companion dismounted, and with his gun succeeded in wounding it, but not severely. On riding up to secure it, I was attacked by the bird, but managed to keep it off with my whip, and, awaiting my opportunity, threw my lasso. I did not succeed in looping it, but the rope twisted round its neck. The bird again savagely attacked me, but the Indian came to my assistance, and

A Lengua Canoe

Lenguas about to cross the River Paraguay in a "Dug-out" tree. Wooden spades and fire are used in the process of forming these canoes. For stability the occupants kneel. Paddles are used for propulsion and steering.

succeeded in getting hold of the other end of the rope, by which means we strangled it.

Perhaps the most valuable game of the Chaco, and the most sought after, is the rhea, not only on account of its flesh, which is considered a delicacy, but also for its feathers, which the Indians largely use for personal ornament, and which they barter at the foreign stores.

The ostrich is a very shy but foolish bird, and their methods of hunting it are planned accordingly. If the hunting-ground should happen to be in a palm forest, the hunter binds the leaves of a palm tree together, and places them on his head and shoulders in order to resemble a young tree. With no other concealment than this, he is enabled to get within easy range of his bird. But should he be hunting in ant-hill country, he uses a bunch of creeper instead, such as crowns the head of every ant-hill. In open scrub country another device is occasionally adopted. The hunters block up the openings between the various copses with brushwood, and other Indians, lying in wait at given points, drive the birds towards them. Although the ostrich could easily jump over the obstacles, he foolishly follows the line of scrub, looking for an opening, and is thus easily shot. In clear and open country, suitable for hunting on horseback, the Indians, riding bare-back, run them down, taking advantage of the zig-zag course of the birds, and in many cases they use the *bola*, a weapon made of plaited strips of hide, weighted at the ends, which twine round the legs, and trip up the victim when thrown in a similar way to the lasso.

Indians are clever mimics, and use this power to great advantage in imitating the cries of certain birds and animals. It is wonderful to see the effect of this on an ostrich. The Indian, secreted in the grass or bushes, imitates the cry of the male bird, and this at once arrests the attention of the ostrich, and if a male, he instantly puffs out his feathers, showing every sign of fight as he advances cautiously in the direction of the sound. On one occasion when I was travelling with Indians, we espied a fox on a bare patch of ground some three hundred yards in

front. One of my companions signalled to us to lie down in the long grass. He then imitated the cry of a wounded bird. Instantly we noticed the fox look up inquiringly. The cry was repeated, and he came towards us. Another cry, and the fox quickened his pace. The Indian continued the imitation until the fox broke into a quick trot, actually coming to within twenty feet of us before he discovered the deception.

When hunting the deer, of which there are three kinds in the Chaco, they use similar disguises to those employed in approaching ostriches. Sometimes these fleet creatures are seen bounding along through the tall thick grass, and a peculiar low, prolonged whistle will frequently arrest their attention and cause them to slacken their pace or stop altogether. A bright red head-dress has also the effect of attracting a deer's attention. Frequently, however, the Indians hunt the deer without any disguise, trusting to their expertness in stalking to get near their quarry. The colour and clothing of the Indian harmonize perfectly with his surroundings, thus enabling him to approach his game with much greater ease than could a European. Whilst stalking game they appear in the distance remarkably like deer, so much so that on two or three occasions I have actually taken aim at an Indian in mistake for a deer, and have only been prevented in the nick of time by my sharper-sighted Indian companions. I once saw two Indians even deceived in the same way into allowing my companion to stalk for a considerable distance what appeared to all of us to be a deer, and the truth dawned upon them only just in time for them to shout as he was raising his rifle.

Wild pigs are found in two varieties in the Chaco, the smaller and larger "peccare," the former being by far the more formidable. Frequently Indians in hunting these animals are forced to take refuge in a tree. The pigs move about in herds, sometimes thirty or forty in number, and the natives assert that they sometimes surround a jaguar which has been tracking them.

One of the most peculiar animals found in the Chaco is the ant-eater, of which there are also two kinds. The great ant-eater measures about seven feet from snout to tail, and is said

by the Indians to succeed sometimes in killing the jaguar. I have often found natives making wax models of the ant-eater with its young on its back, which they say is their mode of carrying them.

In addition to the beasts already mentioned, there are the tapir, maned wolf, fox, armadillo, tiger-cat, carpincho (river-pig), nutria, otter, iguana, and a number of smaller animals, none of which call for any special comment in the methods of hunting them.

The puma and the jaguar are the two largest carnivora, but the former is not feared by the natives. The jaguar, however, they hold in great respect, and with good reason, for man-eaters are occasionally met with. Not long ago one of the mission Indians, while honey-hunting in the forest, was killed and devoured by one. The natives say, however, that it is only when the jaguar becomes old and his teeth are worn that he ventures to attack man, being then unable to pursue fleeter game, or to tear the tougher covering of some of his prey. Starvation drives him to the desperate expedient of attacking man, of whom he is otherwise afraid. But when the jaguar is hunted he shows fight, especially when cornered, or with cubs, as is instanced by the many scars that Indians carry who engage in this dangerous sport, in which some not unfrequently lose their lives. In these hunts they generally lose a large number of their dogs, the jaguar ripping up with a single blow any that come within reach.

They are skilful in trapping, but I need only describe the jaguar-trap in particular. Selecting a path in the forest along which they have noticed spoor, they fell a tree, thus blocking the way; at one side they dig a pit across it in which they suspend a looped lasso with the end tied to a stout branch of a neighbouring tree. The lasso is so arranged that when the jaguar falls into the pit, it tightens around his body in such a manner as to prevent him biting it through and escaping. The Indians say that the blocking up of its accustomed path greatly puzzles the animal, and he is so occupied in looking for an exit, which has been designedly arranged for in the direction of the

pit, that he fails to notice the mouth of the trap, which is covered over to make it look as natural as possible.

A rather serio-comic adventure of an Indian with a jaguar took place near one of our stations. Several hunters had gone into the forest and had become scattered in searching for honey. One, having observed a hollow in a tree, climbed it in order to extract the much-sought-after dainty. While busily occupied in this, he was horrified to see a huge jaguar coming in his direction. It took its stand beneath the tree, occasionally looking up at him, while it mauled his hide sandals, which he had left at the root together with his weapons. Fearing lest it should climb after him, he went up higher to the smaller branches, where the jaguar could not reach him on account of its weight and the difficulty of getting a good grip with its claws. To his disgust, close above him was a wasps' nest, and in order to protect himself he had to cover his body as best he could with his blanket, but not sufficiently to prevent his exposed parts receiving many stings. He proceeded to shout lustily for help, and his companions in time came to his rescue. Perceiving the cause of the alarm, they quickly took shelter behind the larger trees, and from their cover shot at the jaguar. It sprang at one, who dodged behind the trunk, but the others poured in a few more arrows and killed it. The released prisoner speedily descended from his uncomfortable position, and helped his rescuers to take off the valuable skin, which, together with the fat, they carried off in triumph to the village. The danger being passed, they sat round the fires eating the fat and indulging in merry jokes at their companion's expense.

While the Indians fully enjoy the excitement of sport, hunting is nevertheless an important matter to them, for it is chiefly by the chase that they are enabled to satisfy the hunger from which they are seldom free.

CHAPTER IX

TRAVEL

It is only during the last ten years that the Mission has been enabled to found permanent stations, and to carry on a regular and organized work among the Lenguas. In order to win any influence over a people of wild and roving disposition, forced by circumstances to be continually moving from place to place in search of a precarious subsistence, it is necessary for one who undertakes such a task to take part in every phase of their strange life; in fact, he must become an Indian, until such time as his purpose has been accomplished. Had I not taken this course, it is extremely questionable whether these people could ever have been satisfactorily or adequately reached. It was absolutely essential to acquire a knowledge of their strange language, and to become acquainted with their character and all phases of their life.

My early years were therefore spent in moving about from village to village, and in living in the closest intimacy with these children of nature; and as it was my object to get into touch with as many clans and tribes as possible, I spent these years in various parts of the country, continually coming into contact with new people, who, although in the main alike, varied somewhat in characteristics, customs, and habits, and among whom I found a considerable variety of traditions and religious opinions.

Instead of wearying the reader with a bald and dry enumeration of the native laws, customs, and modes of living, I shall leave him to gather these for himself as they are incidentally

unfolded in the following narrative of some of my journeys, and elsewhere in this work.

Little more than eighteen months had elapsed since I had begun my travels in the interior, when I succeeded in establishing temporary headquarters at Thlagnasinkinmith, where a considerable number of Indians had gathered round me. The Venerable Archdeacon Shimield, of the South American Missionary Society, joined me there for a time, to estimate for himself the possibilities of forming a Mission in this country. In order to give him a hearty welcome, I arranged with the Indians that we should hold a great feast on his arrival. Preparations were accordingly made, messengers were sent out to invite the neighbouring villagers, and over four hundred and fifty people gathered to welcome him.

Just before his arrival I hired a bullock-cart from a wood-cutter on the river-bank, and endeavoured to take it inland. The difficulties were considerable, and they were aggravated by the bad weather that set in. However, the cart arrived safely at the settlement, greatly to the surprise and delight of the natives. The attempt proved so far successful that I purchased a cart and bullocks, which greatly facilitated further operations.

While the Archdeacon was with me, our provisions ran extremely low, and we were reduced for ten days to a diet of small black beans. The Archdeacon dryly remarked that he had frequently heard the expression, "I will give you beans," but that he had never realized its full import till now. Another of his hardships on this visit was that he could never enjoy a smoke until the villagers had gone to sleep. This was on account of the Indian custom of courteously exchanging pipes whenever they met, and of passing the pipe round from mouth to mouth when in company. This is considered to be the height of friendliness, and it is a great breach of etiquette on the part of a foreigner not to comply with the formalities. Having adopted in great part the Indian customs, and having by this time spent more than five years among Indians, I was not at all inconvenienced by it, but he naturally was, and with some justification, for it is rather unpleasant to take the pipe

from the mouth of a not over-clean savage, who has perhaps been eating the flesh of a savoury rattle-snake, and, without wiping the mouth-piece (which would be the height of discourtesy), to put it in one's own mouth and proceed to smoke. But I had found it expedient in non-essentials to enter into all the ways of the Indian, that I might thereby the more easily win his confidence.

As business required that both the Archdeacon and myself should leave the settlement for a time and visit Concepción, I left the little property that we had in charge of the chief men of the village. In about a fortnight we returned, bringing with us the cart and provisions and a few Indians who had accompanied us to the river. About halfway out to the settlement a violent storm broke upon us, and it was necessary for the cart to remain there till the morning. The Archdeacon and myself, with an Indian, resolved to push on in spite of the darkness, in order to try and reach the village, which was quite eighteen miles away. I will quote the Archdeacon's own words in his report to the Society of his experiences:

"We covered up the stores in the cart as well as we could, and by that time the storm had burst in all its fury. The thunder and lightning were terrific, and the rain came down in sheets. We were quickly drenched to the skin, and the camp was soon turned into a lake. It was impossible for the bullocks to go on in such a storm; several large swamps lay between us and the *toldo* (Indian village), and the animals were already tired. The cart must wait till morning, but the prospect of standing or sitting all night in water a foot deep was one which made me determine to try to reach the *toldo*.

"Leaving the cart in charge of the assistant and the Indians, Mr. Grubb and I mounted our horses, and, accompanied by an Indian, we pushed on through the storm. The lightning darted round us like arrows of fire; we were almost blinded by its brilliance, and bewildered by the tropical rain driving in our faces. The camp was covered with water nearly to the horses' knees, and the darkness between the flashes of lightning was intense. No one, I believe, but an Indian could have found the

way. We reached the *toldo* at midnight soaked with water, and with worn-out horses.

"We hoped that then our troubles would be over, but were disappointed, for we found our huts flooded with water. Going into the largest of them, we had to seize what dry clothes we could and beat a hasty retreat, for a colony of ants had taken possession during our absence, and as we entered they swarmed over us from head to foot, stinging us so severely that we were speedily routed. The smaller hut was half full of water, and we had to mount the table to change our things, and pick off the ants from our bodies.

"The rain continued for a week. There was no chance of drying our wet clothes and baggage; the boots we took off were green with mildew in the morning; and, to add to our discomfort, the stores which arrived in the cart next day were nearly all spoiled by the wet. So the Indians, as well as ourselves, had to be content with very short commons for a week."

On my arrival at the station I was surprised to find no Indians there. I confess I had some misgivings at first, but my Indian companion soon called my attention to fires near the forest some distance away, and on closer examination we came to the conclusion that the people for some reason must have removed thither and camped. I sent him off to get firing and to inquire the reason. He returned presently, accompanied by a few Indians bringing live fire-brands. While waiting for the kettle to boil, we managed to get rid of the ants, and changed our clothes. Water was lying on the ground everywhere, and there must have been a seven-inch fall of rain that night.

After a meagre supper we settled down to sleep as best we could, the storm raging without. But before the Indians retired I gathered that a man had died during my absence, and that they had burnt their booths and retreated to the forest through fear of his spirit. Had it not been for our huts and possessions, they would have removed much further off; but they wanted to remain in the vicinity, expecting my return. They strongly urged us to sleep at their village that night, but

we assured them we much preferred to stay where we were, as we had no fear of any ghost of the dead.

Finding remonstrance vain, they at last departed; but early in the morning I heard Pinse-apawa outside, cautiously calling to me. He received no answer at first, so he called again, but, as we wanted to be rid of him and sleep a little longer, I shouted to him to go and boil my kettle. I think he was surprised to find us unharmed by the spirit; but when, after further questioning, I declared that we had slept well, he seemed still more surprised. The very idea of our being able to sleep when we knew that a man had just died in the vicinity, and that his ghost must be prowling about, was more than the Indian could comprehend.

Shortly after this the Archdeacon left me. I accompanied him to the river on an Indian horse, riding bareback the thirty odd miles, as it would not allow itself to be saddled. This would have been a heavy strain on a man unaccustomed to it, but during my sojourn with the Indians I had often joined them in breaking in their wild horses, always riding bareback, as their habit is, with only string for a bit and a plaited deer-hide bridle. Many of my readers may be aware that the usual custom in South America differs from that in vogue in England. There the horses are trained to answer the bridle by pressure on the side of the neck.

On my return from escorting the Archdeacon, I was accompanied on horseback by an old witch-doctor from the north and his son. All went well until we reached the head waters of the River Fernandez. I was leading, and made straight for the usual crossing, which was very wide and rather deep; but the witch-doctor called to me, and said that there was a better ford farther down. We travelled on in the pitch-darkness for some time, and then attempted the crossing, but only floundered in the soft mud. We tried again at another place, with the same result. I then angrily insisted on going back to the original ford. After a time they consented. I had two dogs with me, and, contrary to their usual custom, they refused to follow me into the water. I told the witch-doctor to go on ahead while

I tried to coax the dogs into the stream ; but before I was halfway across, my companions, who had already reached the other bank, whipped up their horses and dashed into the forest, through which the path lay. I followed them for a time, although it was pitch-dark, but eventually could not tell where I was. I accordingly stood still and shouted. After repeating this for some time, I heard a faint call in the distance. I shouted again at intervals, and waited.

It was about 1.30 a.m. when my companions eventually rejoined me, and I was by no means in a pleasant humour, being wet, cold, mud-bespattered, and much worried by mosquitos. I upbraided them for their conduct, but the witch-doctor assured me that there was a devil at the crossing, that the dogs had seen it, and that was the reason why they would not enter, adding that it was a wonder we had got through at all. This incident was annoying, but was only what one must expect amongst people in their condition.

My anger increased later on, when I returned to the settlement, for I found that the old wizard had given the Indians quite a false account of the matter. His version was that while I was crossing the river, the devil had caught me by the leg, and had nearly succeeded in pulling me off my horse, and that in our headlong flight I had lost my way in the forest, and, being in dreadful fear, I had called piteously to him to come to my protection. I promptly proceeded to explain matters to the Indians, but I am quite sure that for many years they accepted the witch-doctor's story.

As the planting season had arrived, the people who had joined me from far distant villages now began to return to their own districts. My scope for usefulness at Thlagnasinkinmith had therefore become, for the time being, so restricted that I took an early opportunity to move further inland, and spend a few months in visiting various Indian centres. I accordingly decided to join a small party who were the last to leave. We had hoped to start soon after dawn, but so many preparations had to be made that it was late in the morning before we got away. My own preparations were quite simple. All that I

required was carried with me on my horse. The women were busy from the first light packing up their household goods and filling water-bottles, while the men searched for the horses.

When all was ready, the women with the children were mounted on the horses. As the Indians do not use saddles, they fix all their belongings to their own persons, having nothing else to tie them to Lashed upon each side of the women were two large reed mats, with which they easily form a temporary shelter when camping. Tied round their waists, and resting behind and in front, large string-woven bags were carried containing their goods, and water-jars and cooking-pots hung from their necks and shoulders.

Two children were perched on the bundles, the elder in each case being seated behind, taking firm hold of the woman, while she held the younger one in front of her As there were few mounts, the other women followed behind in Indian file, bending under heavy burdens of similar household property, packed in net-bags, suspended from their foreheads, and resting on their backs. A few old men led the way, carrying only their weapons. The other men of the party had set off a little earlier, in order to hunt on the way to the first encampment. I brought up the rear of this strange cavalcade.

After pushing steadily on over perfectly dry but rough paths, sometimes over open plains, with a hot sun pouring down upon us, at other times working our way through long tangled grass which reached to the shoulders, and occasionally entering the welcome shade of a forest path, we eventually reached the mid-day camping place. There we found one of the hunters resting under a tree. My friends were cheered to hear from him that the hunting-party had shot a large deer and an ostrich.

When they had relieved themselves of their burdens, and tethered the horses, they rested for a little while, and then proceeded to light fires and procure water, the little they had brought with them being quite insufficient. As there had been a prolonged spell of dry weather, the only procurable water was that found in the *caraguata*[1] plant, which is the salvation of

[1] See Appendix—Fauna and Flora.

Chaco travellers in the dry season. Its long channelled leaves collect the dew and rain, and thus a supply of water is preserved for some months. I accompanied the women to the forest near the place where this valuable plant was to be found, carrying with us all available pots and jars.

The *caraguata*, which in shape resembles a large aloe, is armed with innumerable sharp thorns, which prevent animals from drinking its water, and at the same time make it very difficult for man to handle it. The sharp spiky leaves we first lopped off with a knife, and then, cutting the plants out at the roots, we held them over one of the clay pots, and, stabbing them from below, allowed the water to run out. Each plant gave us a good cupful of water. As soon as one vessel was full, we strained the water into another through a bunch of grass, in order to free it from the innumerable spiders and other insects, as well as vegetable matter, which collect in these plants.

On returning to the camp with our supply, we found the hunters had arrived, and cooking had already begun. A large portion of the freshly-killed meat was spitted on sticks at the side of the fires, as there was no time to sun-dry any of it, and meat soon goes bad in this hot climate. The rest was placed in the pots to boil. While this was cooking, the people threw smaller pieces on the embers to toast and eat in the interval.

In the late afternoon we resumed our journey, taking with us the cooked meat left over, and at sunset we camped for the night near the dry bed of a stream, in the hope of finding a little pool of water. As there is hardly any twilight in this country, it was soon too dark to look for "caraguata"; so we followed the bed of the stream in search of a water-hole, which we were not long in finding, but which contained very little water, and that covered with a green, slimy scum, which gave forth a very unpleasant smell, partly owing to a few dead fish that we found in it. As there was no alternative, we filled our pots and returned to the camp.

It was a beautifully clear night, and as we sat round the fires, chatting, and eating the meat we had brought with us, I learnt from my companions that a girl with whom I was acquainted

was soon to be married at the village we were travelling to, and that the father had already received payment for her, in the shape of a few fish-hooks and two iron hoes bought from the Paraguayans. I was informed that the marriage was not going to take place until the *algaroba* bean harvest began, in order that they might have a supply of beer for the accompanying feast. I inquired who the husband was to be, but could not recognize him by his name, although they assured me that I knew him well. It turned out that he was an old friend of mine called "Mitaimang-itakthla," who had lost his wife some time before. I had not heard that he had had a child, and that, according to Indian custom, he had changed his name, being now called "Simpehe-abyabam," after the name of his child—that is to say, "the father of Simpehe." This is a very curious and awkward custom, the parents always changing their own name on the birth of a child, and being afterwards known as "the father or mother of So-and-so," a new name being assumed after every child born.

The women and children feeling drowsy, a general movement was made to prepare for the night's rest. As the mosquitos were few, it was unnecessary to prepare smoky fires to keep them off. The men brought in three long palm-trunks, and placed them on different sides of the fire, and about ten feet away; the women spread their skin-mats in rows on the side of the logs next to the fire. They then arranged themselves according to their families, using the palms as a common pillow. One of the logs was reserved for me and the young men, and a few families preferred to camp round little fires of their own.

As I was not sleepy, I sat up with a few of the men, chatting round the fire. One of the older men was busily engaged in making fire-sticks, by rubbing which together they obtain their fire, and in the course of conversation he recounted to me their tradition of its origin. In early times, being unable to produce fire, they were compelled to eat their food in the raw state. One day an Indian was out hunting, but had been unsuccessful all the morning, so towards midday, in order to satisfy the

pangs of hunger, he repaired to the vicinity of a swamp to gather some snails.

While he was eating these, his attention was attracted to a bird coming out from the swamp with a snail in its bill. This it seemed to deposit near a large tree some little way off. It then returned to the swamp and brought up another snail, and repeated this manœuvre several times. The Indian noticed that from the spot where the bird placed the snails there arose, as it were, a thin column of vapour. His curiosity was at once aroused.

After a time the bird again flew away, and, determined to unravel this mystery, he cautiously proceeded to the place where the bird had risen. There he observed a number of sticks, placed point to point, the ends quite red and giving forth heat. Approaching timorously, he saw some snails placed close to these sticks. As he observed no signs of the bird's return, and being still hungry, he resolved to partake of some of this food. Putting forth his hand, he took up a snail, which he instantly dropped, for it caused him acute pain. But he was so hungry that he made another attempt, and, picking it up more cautiously, tasted it. He found it delicious, and better than anything he had ever tasted before. He took another and another, and so keenly enjoyed them that he made up his mind he would never again eat raw snails.

He was somewhat afraid of this bird, but as it had not returned he seized several of the sticks and ran off with them to his village, where he told his friends of his find. They immediately got a supply of dry wood from the forest in order to keep alive this invaluable acquisition, which they henceforth called *tathla*, or fire. That night they cooked their meat and vegetables for the first time, and gradually found new uses for their discovery.

When the bird, on returning to the place where it had left the snails, discovered the loss of its fire, it was filled with rage, and determined to be revenged on the thief. Its anger was increased by the fact that it could not produce more fire. Soaring up into the sky, it circled about in search of the thief, and,

PROCURING FIRE BY FRICTION

A stick of the Hapin tree is used as a drill, which is worked between the palms of the hands in a prepared notch of another stick. The tinder-horn, filled with soft dry fibre, is kept handy, into which the ignited dust is smartly tipped and coaxed by gentle blowing. An arrow-shaft is fixed to the perpendicular stick in order to give additional purchase.

to its amazement, saw the people of the village sitting around the stolen treasure, enjoying its warmth and cooking their food by it. Filled with thoughts of vengeance, it retired to the forest, where it created a thunderstorm, accompanied by terrible lightning, which did much damage and terrified the people.

The old man told me that, when it thunders, it is an indication that the thunder-bird is angry, and is seeking to punish them by fire from the sky, for ever since the bird lost its fire it has had to eat its food raw.

It is curious that the Indians should believe such a fable as this, since they themselves produce fire by friction; nor are they particularly careful to keep a fire alight when not required. Neither are they afraid of either thunder or lightning.

After the conclusion of this interesting story we stretched ourselves out by the fire, with our palm-log for a pillow, and were soon asleep.

Early next morning we resumed our way, but as our destination was still about two days' journey off, I left the party that afternoon with one Indian guide, and struck off northwards, with the intention of visiting a hunting-camp of which I was told, hoping to reach it that night. I explained to the party that as we could travel much faster than they, we should probably arrive at their village as soon as they did, if not before.

We journeyed on till midday through open country and palm forest, and being very thirsty, we looked out for woods in which we might find *caraguata*, but we met with nothing but small copses, and the few plants they contained were dry. We pushed on in spite of the intense heat, but about four o'clock our horses became so exhausted that we were compelled to walk and lead them. We were now suffering so much from thirst, after having gone for ten hours without drinking, that conversation became painful. There was no alternative but to press on, and about seven o'clock, when it was quite dark, we crossed the dry bed of a swamp stream. Midway, among the tall reeds, my guide discovered a small hole containing water. He knelt down, and greedily took a few mouthfuls, but immediately

vomited. In spite of this, forced by intolerable thirst, I drank a little of it, but with the same result. The horses would not touch it, and we had to be content with rinsing our parched mouths, for on examination we found that it was putrid with dead fish. Weary, feverish, and sick, we pushed on through the night, still leading our horses.

It was evident from the tracks which we found that the hunters had moved their camp. About two o'clock in the morning we entered a large swamp, and, after having gone about half a mile, we were rejoiced to find ourselves walking in mud. We hastened our steps, and found the mud became more liquid, till at last we reached water. Instantly the horses began to drink, and, stooping down to taste, we found it tolerably drinkable. How we enjoyed that thick, muddy water, and how long and deep were the draughts we took! We felt much refreshed, and soon reached the other side. Here, without troubling to light a fire, we tethered our horses, and lay down to sleep, having eaten nothing all that day.

When the sun rose we sought for the tracks of the hunters, and were not long in finding them and in reaching the camp. Food was placed before us, and we soon forgot the sufferings of our journey.

I was anxious to make a sketch-map of the district, and inquired of the people the situation of the surrounding villages. Pulling out my pocket-compass, which they had never before seen, I began to take my bearings. I was soon the centre of a curious crowd, and some of them asked me what the thing was, and why I used it. I explained to them that the little blue hand always pointed to the north wherever I happened to be, but they looked incredulous. One old man took it from me and examined it carefully. He noticed that, whichever way he turned, the little hand, as I had explained, always pointed north. The Indians never make any mistake about the cardinal points; in fact, they rarely use such expressions as "the right hand" or "the left hand," preferring to say "on the north side" or "on the south side," as the case may be. The behaviour of this little pointer puzzled the old man. Presently a fresh thought

occurred to him, and he put the compass under his blanket. After turning it about and upside down, he peeped underneath and watched the needle settle, but he was surprised beyond measure to find it still pointing to the north, and a lively discussion ensued.

They knew that my country was far distant in the north, and, after a great deal of talking, the old man declared it to be his firm opinion that, before I had left my own land, I had caught a little blue devil and had secured it in this case, and that it was continually pointing out my road homewards with its finger.

After enjoying a rest and, what was more necessary, a good sleep, we started on our journey to rejoin my companions by a new route, as we had no desire to repeat our experiences of the night before. On arrival at the village some time after nightfall, we found that our party had already reached it.

That day news had come in of the death of an old resident in a village to the south. It appears that he had been very ill for a long time, and had been suffering intense pain. He was very old and frail, and could not possibly have lived much longer. His relatives grieved to see him suffering, and, realizing that there was no possible hope for him, agreed to hasten his death. His brother and son-in-law took an early opportunity to carry this resolve into effect. Taking the old man unawares, the son-in-law suddenly wrapped a blanket round his head, while the brother at the same time sat upon his chest, and so he was suffocated.

I was much shocked at hearing this gruesome story, and yet I had to admit that, in the case of these heathen, it was not what we should regard as cruelty. Their unnatural act was really prompted by kindness, and by a desire to adopt extreme measures, rather than let the sick man suffer.

I stayed some weeks at this village, occasionally paying visits to neighbouring encampments. Hearing of a large feast some days' journey to the west, I set out in that direction with an Indian guide. On arriving at the village, I found over one hundred and seventy people gathered together for the occasion.

Most of the men were very intoxicated, and I received rather a doubtful welcome. While some appeared delighted to see me, and expressed their pleasure that I had arrived in time to join in their festivities, the Chief and some others, almost at the same moment, accused me of having, by witchcraft, killed one of their horses, as they had found it dead the day before my arrival. I argued the matter with them, and suggested that death was probably due to snake-bite, or perhaps lightning; but they would accept none of my explanations, and did not conceal their anger. Although I spent some time in the village, I did not take part in the feast, and deemed it advisable to make my camp under some trees a little way off.

My guide, as might be expected, was taking his full part in the merry-making, so, being alone, I retired to rest. Several times during the early part of the night natives visited me, and urged me to come out from under my mosquito-net and join them in the dances; but I refused all their invitations. About midnight, as I was feeling thirsty, and had no water by me, I called out for some to be brought to me. The Indian word for water is *yingmin*, and for beer *anmin*. One old man, mistaking my call, and being himself in rather a muddled condition, thought I had shouted for *anmin*, and presently arrived with a calabash full of beer. This I refused, and told him I wanted water. He evidently felt amused, and, calling to a girl to fetch water, he himself drank the beer as he sat by me, but for the rest of that night he never seemed to have got rid of the idea that I wanted beer, and kept on visiting me with further supplies, greatly to my annoyance. On two occasions, finding me asleep, he lifted up my net, letting in swarms of mosquitos, and, stumbling forward, drenched me with the beer, for his calabash held at least two quarts. What with the insects and the discomfort of my beer-soaked bed and garments, I enjoyed little sleep that night.

In the morning, as I had no further desire to remain, I determined to visit a village about half a day's journey off. My guide wished to linger at the feast, so I applied to the Chief, Mechi, for another. He told me that he would procure

me one, but after waiting some time I became impatient, and called him up again. He was very intoxicated, and said he could induce no one to accompany me. I then insisted on his acting as my guide. After a few hot words he consented, and his horse was brought. But it was soon evident that he could not keep his balance on it, as he fell to the ground at each attempt to mount. At last a happy thought came to him, and he commandeered a young lad, who was made to get up behind and hold him on. With this strange escort I commenced my journey. My new guide gradually became sober, although he kept up a confused conversation the whole way, the main drift of which seemed to be that native beer was very good, and that it really had very few bad effects.

On arriving at my destination, I found that a feast was also contemplated there, on the conclusion of the one I had just left, and that preparations had already begun, the women being busily engaged in making flour from the bean of the *algaroba* tree, which is fairly common in the drier parts of the Chaco. It produces a plentiful supply of a very nourishing bean, which forms a large proportion of the Indian food while it is in season, being not only pounded into flour for cakes, but largely used for brewing a native beer.

I had no wish to be present at this second feast, and determined to make my way back again to Thlagnasinkinmith, as I wanted to avoid being overtaken by the heavy rains, which were shortly expected. I arranged with three Indian lads to accompany me, and, all being ready for a start in the early afternoon, I began to take my leave of the people. My three companions were indulging in a game of hockey, which is indigenous among these people, but in a very primitive form, and I had great difficulty in persuading them to make a start.

All went well until the evening of the second day, when the gathering darkness compelled us to camp under a few trees in an open plain. We had previously observed that heavy banks of clouds were gathering in the west and south, but the Indians were of opinion that the threatened storm would not break till the following morning. I therefore looked forward to a com-

fortable night's rest, but I was sadly disappointed. About seven o'clock it began to thunder, and forked lightning shot across the sky in all directions. Still, it did not rain, and I soon got under my net. I had been asleep only a short time when my Indians awoke me, informing me that the storm was about to burst.

I hastily arose in order to secure my more perishable belongings, and, gathering together my saddle-gear and bedding, I covered them up as well as I could at the root of a tree. I had hardly done so when the roar of the wind was heard in the south, and a great black cloud stretched itself across the horizon close to the ground. It was evident that a dust-storm was upon us, and, together with the Indians, I crouched down and covered my mouth and nose. In a few minutes we were smothered with dust and nearly choked. Shortly afterwards great drops of rain began to fall. The thunder was terrific and the lightning exceptionally vivid. The torrential downpour soon put out our fire and chilled us to the bone. We all huddled together for warmth, but were very soon actually sitting in water, and in this miserable condition we were forced to pass the night.

When morning dawned it was still raining, but we made preparations to move on. The lower-lying land was entirely covered with some inches of water, and the previously dry stream-beds and swamps were already almost half-full. About midday we reached a deserted hut, and, making a fire, we were able partially to dry our clothes.

The rest of the journey was hard for both man and beast. Often the horses were tethered in water over their fetlocks. Frequently we had to cross gullies, where the water nearly covered my saddle, and our horses were at times momentarily off their feet. On arriving at the larger streams we had to make rafts to transport our belongings, and across the smaller we swam with our goods, in instalments, tied upon our heads.

After six days' journeying under these miserable conditions we were glad indeed to arrive at Thlagnasinkinmith.

CHAPTER X

WAR

Long before the Spanish Conquest, the Indians of the Chaco waged constant war against the Guarani Indians on the eastern bank of the River Paraguay, and after the Conquest they still remained the terror of the Spanish settlements. It is the proud boast of these Chaco peoples, who are practically independent to the present day, that they have never been conquered. The inaccessible nature of their country, and the fact that it lacks such natural riches as would rouse the cupidity of the foreigner, account for their independence not having been seriously menaced. During the last forty years, the Chaco tribes have caused little trouble to the European, and only some few unimportant skirmishes have taken place. Their wars, during my residence in the country, have been confined to the western and northern frontiers, so that I have not been an actual eye-witness of any of their engagements, and can only speak on the subject of war from the reports given me by the Indians.

There are many accounts of their wars in past generations, but it is difficult to discriminate between fact and fiction. About the time of the great Paraguayan War, however, their warlike adventures come within the scope of history. It is an acknowledged fact that many of them joined with other northern tribes in making incursions into Paraguay proper, after that country had become enfeebled by its five years' struggle against the united forces of the Argentine and Uruguayan Republics, and the then-existing Empire of Brazil. The Indians had sacked several settlements and some small towns in Paraguay, and had taken thence several captives to

their fastnesses, some of whom remained in the hands of the tribes up to my own time.

An Indian recounted to me the following story concerning one of their encounters with the Paraguayan troops, and seemed very proud of it, holding that it proved the heroism of his people. The Indians were attacked in the Chaco by a body of cavalry, and although his tribesmen were vastly superior in numbers, yet, owing to the inferiority of their weapons, they found resistance impossible. Some of them, therefore, determined to sacrifice their lives for the common good, and throwing themselves in a mass upon the cavalry, clung to the men and horses, and, in spite of numbers of them being cut down, they succeeded in hampering the movements of the troop, and thus enabled their comrades to close in upon the enemy. Many of the horsemen were dragged from their horses and clubbed on the ground. The loss of the Indians was heavy, but they found plenty of compensation in having killed a considerable number of the hated foreigners.

During the past generation, several rather important wars have been waged against the Matacos in the south-west, and the Kilmikpiyim in the north-north-west, with the result that many women and children were taken prisoners on both sides, and to the present day it is not exceptional to find among those tribes some who understand both languages.

The only important war carried on in the immediate vicinity of our Mission was that between the Lenguas and the Kisapang, a short time before my arrival among them. This encounter left a very bitter feeling between the two tribes, and even yet it has not quite died out, although the spread of Christianity is rapidly leading to a more friendly and better understanding between them. The Lengua conquerors, among whom the Mission has chiefly worked, took the initiative in offering the hand of friendship to their former enemies, and it is not an infrequent occurrence now to see Kisapang and Lenguas mixing and working together on friendly terms at the Mission stations.

The main causes leading to inter-tribal war are many, the most frequent being the supposed evil wrought by the witch-

doctors of one tribe against another. The greed for acquiring the flocks and herds of another tribe, on which covetous eyes have been set, prompts them to wage a selfish war rather than to negotiate for them by the usual means of barter, common to all the tribes. Another cause, and the only other worth mentioning, is the desire to possess themselves of a supply of women. This is the more strange because the practice of infanticide is mainly directed towards keeping down the female population, and, as only a few tribes are polygamous, the only explanation I can give is the natural desire to maintain the vitality of their people, which, owing to their custom of continual intermarriage, is seriously affected.

It is, perhaps, superfluous to state that they have no such thing as a regular army, but every able-bodied man is expected to bear his part in time of war. When hostilities have been decided upon by the leaders of the people, the various clans are summoned by means of red arrows, signifying blood. These are carried from village to village by messengers, who tell the people the place of rendezvous. Steps are immediately taken to place the aged, the women, children, and the flocks in positions of safety, a certain number of men remaining to protect them. The rest hasten off to the appointed meeting-place. Once there, a war-chief is chosen, and then the plan of campaign is agreed upon.

Many people imagine that a barbarous race such as this must act in war like a disorganized mob, every man fighting for himself, but the truth is that they work on carefully-planned lines. The first step taken is to establish an excellent intelligence department. Their best men are sent out as spies, with the object of getting as close as possible to the enemy. At stated intervals messengers are posted, and through them communication is kept up between the spies and headquarters. When the favourable moment for attack has arrived, the men, divided into bands, are instructed to advance upon the enemy from certain positions. A supporting force is arranged for, and ambuscades are planned. The forces advance under cover of night, and the attack is invariably made at about the rising of the morning star, an

hour or so before dawn. In case of defeat a rallying-point is fixed upon, but should victory result, every man has his duty prearranged. Some guard the captives, others drive off the flocks, some attend to the plunder, while others are deputed to bury the dead and to care for the wounded.

The Indians, in their wars, exercise the greatest prudence, and never expose themselves in large numbers to be shot at. They are great strategists, and take every advantage of cover, a practice to which their hunting life so well accustoms them. As they procure their food as best they can, obtaining roots from the forests, robbing gardens, and hunting what game they can find *en route*, they naturally form a very mobile force. Every man is supposed to look after himself; he knows the country as well by night as by day, and is therefore a complete unit in himself.

The Indians rarely fight in a body, as their one object is to overthrow their enemy with as little loss of life to themselves as possible. This method makes it extremely difficult for trained troops to fight successfully against them. Disciplined soldiers are dependent upon each other, and of necessity are compelled to form camps, and keep more or less together. They rarely succeed in surrounding a body of Indians, or in forcing them into the open, whereas the Indian sniper with his bow and arrow gains a decided advantage in spite of the inferiority of his weapons. His arrow makes no noise, and he is thus able to pick off sentinels without alarming the enemy's outposts, and as in such a country as this the invading force has to pasture its horses, the Indian frequently succeeds in capturing, or at least stampeding them.

When attacking an Indian village, it is their custom first to discharge a flight or two of arrows, and then rush in with their clubs. They kill all grown men and women who do not succeed in escaping, and spare only the younger women and children. This is done for obvious reasons. The younger women they marry, and all soon settle down to the care of their families. The children readily amalgamate with the tribe, the more so as captives are generally well treated, and admitted to equal

privileges with their conquerors. With the older people, however, the hostile feeling never dies out; they are constantly seeking to escape, and were they to save any number of grown men, they would revolt upon any favourable opportunity. Wounded men receive no quarter, but are killed on the spot, as the Indian asserts that, if spared, they would take the first opportunity to revenge themselves.

The reasons given for invariably selecting the hour before dawn for making the attack are, that the enemy, if unaware of the presence of an attacking force, sleep most heavily at that hour, and that the few who might happen to be awake, do not move far from the village fires owing to the chill of the morning.

An account given me by an Indian of an attack upon a Kisapang village during the war already referred to is interesting, as it describes their tactics. The village in question was situated on the southern side of a large forest. To the east and south flowed a sluggish swamp stream, and on the western bank nearest to the village there were some dug-out canoes, used by the Kisapang for crossing. To the south-west lay a stretch of open country covered with ant-hills, and to the north-west a number of small woods, with spaces between, leading out into the open country beyond.

The attacking force, having been previously informed of the location and surroundings of the village by the spies, advanced under cover of night and took up the following positions. The main body occupied the spaces on the north-west, while a reserve force remained some distance in the rear. In the open ant-hill plain, a small body of good marksmen were located, hiding themselves behind the ant-hills, and another body took up a position in a small wood opposite the place where the canoes lay. Swimming across the river, they brought them over to their own side. The main body, when the moment was considered favourable, made a rush upon the village, their shouts being the signal to the others. Those in the ant-hill plain remained under cover in order to cut off any fugitives who might attempt to escape that way, while half the force on the east crossed over in the canoes, and, just as the villagers were closing

with the invaders from the north-west, rushed up and attacked from behind.

Taken unawares, and in the dim light, the villagers, after fighting stubbornly for a time in order to cover the retreat of their women and children, who had mostly escaped into the forest behind them, scattered in all directions. Some rushed for the plain, and were shot down by those in hiding behind the ant-hills; the others tried to escape by the canoes, but were intercepted by the other half of the force left on the east for that very purpose.

Had the Lenguas devoted less attention to securing the few women who had not succeeded in escaping, they might have been able to overtake those who had fled into the forest. As it was, not knowing the intricate forest-paths, it was soon too late for them to pursue the enemy in that direction.

Although many of the Kisapang men succeeded in eluding their pursuers, the Lenguas, nevertheless, with comparatively small loss to themselves, killed many of the enemy, and captured all their flocks and most of their personal belongings, but the booty in women and children was small.

Sometimes these tribal wars continue for many months, the belligerents on both sides allowing hostilities to cease while they attend to planting their gardens and other necessary works. A war is no sooner over than the vanquished, gathering strength, seek to revenge themselves, and thus on the frontiers a desultory warfare is being continually carried on. The loss of life in these wars is not nearly so great as might be imagined, and cruelty is not practised to anything like the extent that is generally believed.

CHAPTER XI

RELIGION

The treatment of this subject is exceedingly difficult. The reader must understand that we are dealing with the religion and superstitions of a people who have no written language, of whose origin practically nothing definite is known, and who cannot in any way have had their views influenced by any European or Asiatic people. The only possible contact that they could ever have had with a higher civilization that might have affected their religious ideas must have dated back at least four or five centuries, when it is highly probable that they were either under the influence of the ancient Peruvian Empire, or that they were actually of Inca origin.

Generally speaking, these people, since the discovery of South America by the Spaniards, have remained unchanged—a race of savages, a nomadic people, who have left no permanent remains behind them, no cities, temples, or even burial mounds.

The popular opinion is that they have no religious ideas at all, that they are as the beasts of the field, without even a tradition of the Creation; that they have no morality, and live only according to their instincts. Some people, animated no doubt by the best intentions, are apt to view with too much favour the nobler and better characteristics of heathen races; others, with an undoubted bias against Christianity, endeavour to make out a good case for heathenism, in order to depreciate the mighty and elevating power of Christianity. They pride themselves on being broad and liberal minded, and assert that, although Christianity may suit our particular race, other forms of religion admirably suit the special needs of various heathen

nations. My own experience is that the man who knows most is the most reluctant to make sweeping statements.

The Indian is by nature very reticent, while his general character and modes of thought differ widely from ours in many respects. In conversation much is only hinted at, and not explicitly affirmed or denied ; his tone and manner are often the only guides that one has as to the sincerity of his statements. He is very prone to acquiescing in, or uttering anything that he thinks will please ; he is quick at perceiving what your ready-made opinions are, and sees no harm in gratifying you by endorsing them, however erroneous they may be.

It is admitted to be very difficult really to know the inmost mind of a man, for man, wherever he is found, is not generally given to turning himself inside out for his fellows to gaze at. He will sometimes be frank and open about himself, so far as it suits his purpose, but his deeper feelings he does not so readily expose.

The Indian, although friendly and sociable, does not spontaneously give his confidence to anyone. Therefore on this subject of religion I can only repeat what I have heard from the people at different times, contradictory as some of it undoubtedly is, and endeavour as far as possible to suggest the probable connecting-links, and, by comparing their statements with facts and incidents in their actual life, throw what light I can upon the religious tenets of this strange people.

The contents of this and of succeeding chapters may be of some little value to those who study the primitive beliefs of man, and may enable them, by comparing my statements with the researches of others in various parts of the world, to trace some connection between them, though they may also possibly find some error in the conclusions at which I have arrived.

The symbolism with which the Indians' ideas of higher things are clothed appears to us strange and childish, having more of the nature of a fairy-tale than anything else ; but that is just because we do not probe deep enough beneath the surface. We ourselves talk of beautiful harps and streets of gold, and it sounds to us very refined and poetic. In their case the harps

would be gourds, as representing their musical instruments; their streets of gold would be paths without thorns, and unfrequented by treacherous snakes. In both cases the idea is to picture a state of things vastly superior to anything on earth, and the Indian mind accomplishes this just as fully as the Christian.

When the Indian is questioned on any mythological subject, his whole attitude is entirely against giving any clear exposition or explanation of the theories which he holds. He either avoids answering and turns the question to something else, or professes complete ignorance; at the best he will only make one or two admissions. He does not grasp our system of question and answer, and even to the present day this inability on his part is found to be a great hindrance to educational work by oral examination.

Again, the Indian has not been accustomed to think out and formulate his ideas on any subject in logical sequence, and he has for so long simply accepted these traditions as articles of faith that he has never troubled himself to arrive at any solution of the problem; but when a probable solution is proposed to him he becomes intensely interested, and employs his best reasoning faculties in weighing the force of the suggestions made to him. While so doing, he very often himself recalls incidents bearing on the subject which he had hitherto overlooked.

A little instance will serve to illustrate this. The Indian was acquainted when I first met him with three distinct types of men—the white man, the negro, and himself. The differences of colour he simply accepted. When asked if he could explain why the one race was white and the other brown, like themselves, he looked bewildered, and replied "Kyahas!" as much as to say, "Who knows? We have never thought about it." But when I drew attention to the contrast between my sunburnt face and neck (almost exactly the colour of their own skin), and the whiteness of my chest, reminding them that when I first arrived among them my face and neck had not their present dark hue, and when I explained to them that the change was entirely

owing to the action of the powerful sun, they at once grasped the solution.

Some may remark that Indians in the colder parts of the New World have the same tinge of colour, and ask why the sun should produce a black hue in some cases and a yellow tinge in others. I could not go into the full explanation of this question with the Indian; I was only teaching him to draw conclusions from given data. Essentially I was correct in attributing the above change to the effect of the sun. It is an established fact that the dampness or dryness of the atmosphere through which the light passes materially alters the hue. Any who are interested in this subject must study the question elsewhere, but it was sufficient for my purpose that I succeeded in causing the Indian to think.

Not only is the Indian reticent, but he will only communicate with the few who are fortunate enough to win his entire confidence. I think I may safely say that I have gained that confidence to a very great extent; and, furthermore, I had this advantage—that, being the first white man to live with them, and that, too, before the ideas of Christianity had been sprung upon them, I was in a position to obtain more information than others. The fact also of their regarding me in the early years as one who for some reason had cast off his own people, and desired to be incorporated among them, made them the more anxious and willing to instruct me in their mysteries, such as they were. They looked upon me as a witch-doctor of some distant tribe, who knew many things they did not, but who at the same time was willing to learn from them, and thoroughly appreciated and respected their theories.

Their whole mythology is founded upon their idea of the Creation, of which we know only the bare outlines. The Creator of all things, spiritual and material, is symbolized by a beetle. It seems that the Indian idea is that the material universe was first made. The Creator, in the guise of the beetle, then sent forth from its hole in the earth a race of powerful beings—according to many in an embodied state—who for a time appear to have ruled the universe.

Afterwards the beetle formed man and woman from the clay which it threw up from its hole. These were sent forth on the earth, joined together like the Siamese twins. They met with persecution from their powerful predecessors, and accordingly appealed to the creating beetle to free them from their disadvantageous formation. He therefore separated them, and gave them power to propagate their species, so that they might become numerous enough to withstand their enemies. It then appears that some time after this, or at this time, the powerful beings first created became disembodied, as they never appear again in the tradition of the Indians in material form. The beetle then ceased to take any active part or interest in the governance of the world, but committed its fortunes to these two races, which have been antagonistic ever since.

It is rather remarkable, when we consider that they have no written records, and no system of carefully transmitted tradition, that they should retain a belief in an original Creator, in the immortality of the soul, and in the existence of these powerful and numerous evil personifications, which they call *kilyikhama.*

That the Indian should regard the beetle as the symbol of creative power is, perhaps, the most remarkable feature in their mythology, for it closely resembles the Egyptian Scarabæus and the ideas associated with it. To explain this statement, I will quote Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible": "Out of the mud which the Nile left in its flooding men saw myriad forms of life issue. That of the Scarabæus was the most conspicuous. It seemed to them self-generated, called into being by the light, the child only of the Sun. It became at once the emblem of Ra, the Sun, and its creative power (Clem. Alex.; Euseb.; Brugsch., 'Liber Metempsychoseos'; Wilkinson, 'Ancient Egyptians'). It also came out of the dark earth after the flood of waters, and was therefore the symbol of life rising out of death in new forms (Brugsch., 'Ægypt. Alterth.'). So it was that, not in Egypt only, but in Etruria and Syria and other countries, the same strange emblems appeared (Dennis, 'Cities and Sepulchres of Etruria'; Layard, 'Nineveh') and that

semi-Christian Scarabæi are found with the sacred words Jao, Sabaoth, or the names of angels engraved on them (Bellerman). In older Egypt it was, at any rate, connected with the thought of Divine illumination, found in frequent union with the symbolic eye, the emblem of the providence of God." Furthermore, representations of the beetle, and figures of *kilyikhama* associated with it, are the most common mythological drawings found on Lengua gourds, the articles which they find most convenient for engraving on, which are also the only musical instrument used in any of their ceremonies.

The Indian's idea, therefore, is briefly this—that there was an original First Cause, a Creator who planned and made everything, but that He now takes no part in the governance of the universe, and, therefore, neither rewards nor punishes.

The Indian appears to be a believer in simple and natural laws only. He believes that a man prospers and is happy in this life and the next in so far as he abides by these natural laws, and that he suffers and is punished when he infringes them. To a certain extent this is very true—heaven and hell are of man's own making. The Indian, of course, has no idea of a fall from primitive purity or of an atonement for sin—that is, an atonement made by some perfect being on behalf of the imperfect—and no idea of a resurrection of the body.

He regards the soul as immortal; in fact, he cannot conceive the possibility of man's personality ceasing to exist. The after-life is to him simply a continuation of the present, only in a disembodied condition. He does not regard the future life as a greater, happier, and better existence, nor has he any knowledge of a future state of punishment following on an evil life led in the body. He regards the body as the only means by which the soul can really enjoy itself, and he has little, if any, idea of intellectual or spiritual enjoyment. He accordingly does not view the life after death with any real pleasure, for to him in the disembodied state life will be dull and void. But, on the other hand, as suffering to the Indian means practically only physical suffering, so in the after-life, although he will be debarred from pleasure, yet he will also escape from much, if

not all, of the pain, sorrow, and trouble which attend him in the present.

He seems, however, to believe that pleasure and pain do exist to some small extent in the hereafter; but the pleasure amounts to so little that the future life has no attraction for him, and rather repels him. The one thing to be coveted is life; the one thing to be feared, death.

Holding as he does that the Creator takes no interest in the affairs of man, he naturally renders him no worship; in fact, he worships nothing, and his efforts are confined to avoiding the consequences of evil-doing on earth and to warding off the malignant *kilyikhama*, who, he holds, are continually seeking to mar his happiness.

The Indian, like men of other races, possesses the ordinary natural instincts—love for his friends, parents and children, sympathy with others in distress and in trouble, and the like. Beyond this, his object in life is to gratify his desires as far as possible without getting himself into trouble.

SUHIN PIPE OF CARVED WOOD.

CHAPTER XII

SHADE-LAND

In order the more effectively to deal with this subject, I shall treat it under the three following divisions: The *kilyikhama;* the *aphangak*, or departed souls of men; and the departed souls of the lower creation.

The *kilyikhama* are confined to no particular place. Time and distance do not seem to affect them in the least. They are held in great awe by the Indian, and whithersoever he turns, whether by day or night, but particularly at night, he is subject to their malign influences. They are as varied in their characteristics as the races of men. There is one which frequents the swamps, rivers, and lakes, although he is not confined to them only. This is a white *kilyikhama*, and is supposed to be seen sailing over the waters. He is considered one of the most malignant known to the people, and at night he can be heard whistling shrilly in his little craft among the reeds. In order to protect themselves against this water-spirit, the Indians wear a special head-dress made from the feathers of a rare bird, and this they prize very highly as an all-powerful charm. It is, perhaps, the most costly ornament that they possess, for even when they barter it among themselves it has a considerable value, and a European could buy practically the whole ornamental outfit of an Indian for less than he would have to give for this one charm. I have known them give the equivalent of ten Paraguayan dollars for one, at that time equal to quite 10s.

Another *kilyikhama* is supposed to be in appearance like a boy of about twelve years of age, with two bright shining

lights at each side of his head. He appears to be regarded by them more with respectful awe than with actual dread.

There is a thieving *kilyikhama* for whom they exhibit almost feelings of contempt; and when they lose anything, even through their own carelessness, they attribute the loss to him. There is one whose help they invoke to assist them in their hunting, and another who is supposed to be able to render them help in gardening, especially in the sowing of pumpkins. I might go on giving a long list of the various *kilyikhama* in which they believe, but I must conclude by mentioning only the greatest and most terrible of all. He is met with chiefly in the vicinity of forests, and is believed to be of immense height, extremely thin, and with eyes flaming like balls of fire. To meet him is supposed to herald instant death.

Although all Indians believe firmly in the existence of these spirits, and although they hold that they can be seen by man, yet I have never met an Indian who, on being closely questioned, has seriously professed to have seen one. But it is quite common to hear them assert that they have heard them, and felt that they were near. They live in constant dread of these supernatural beings, and if nothing else contributed to make their life miserable, this ever-present dread of the *kilyikhama* would be in itself quite sufficient to rob it of most of its joy. Some of these spirits, however, are believed to work hand in hand with the witch-doctors, who at least frequently assert that among the *kilyikhama* they have some who render them aid in their sorceries.

The Indian's theory that the *kilyikhama* were at one time embodied seems to be supported by the belief that their great desire is to gain possession of a human body, whether by direct entrance or during sleep, by taking the place of the soul, which is supposed to wander from the body when a man dreams.

That these *kilyikhama* are not the deified souls of men seems clear from the fact that there is no veneration shown them, but whether the Indian idea was originally that they were a distinct spiritual creation, or simply the souls of a prehistoric race, is not clear. The Creation story seems to suggest that

they were altogether a distinct species from man, and there is no trace in Indian mythology of these *kilyikhama* having a special country, or living in tribes or clans, as their theories with regard to the soul of man imply.

We have thought it right to accept partially their belief in the *kilyikhama* as corresponding in a slight degree with our belief in fallen angels; in fact, we have adopted the word *kilyikhama* as a name for them.

The unseen world in its relation to man is naturally much more clearly defined by the Indian. He holds that the *aphangak* or departed souls of men in the shade world (*pischischi*, shadows), merely continue their present life, only of course in a disembodied state. The souls of the departed are supposed, in the ethereal state, to correspond exactly in form and characteristics with the bodies they have left. A tall man and a short man remain tall and short as spirits; a deformed man remains deformed. A kindly-natured man continues so in shade-land. A witch-doctor, or a great Chief, feared and respected in the body, is feared and respected in the spirit-world. Those who were related in this world associate with each other in the next. Departed spirits continue the same tribal and clan life as when in the body. The spirit of a child remains a child and does not develop, and for this reason is not feared. Infanticide is not regarded as murder in the same degree as the murder of an adult. No punishment follows the murderer of an infant, nor is its murder attended by the ordinary superstitious fears. A murderer—that is, according to the Indian idea, a man who kills one of his own tribe—is not only executed for the crime, but his body is burnt, and the ashes scattered to the four winds. The Indian believes that after such treatment his spirit cannot take human form, and remains in the after-world shapeless and unrecognizable, and therefore unable to mingle with its kindred spirits, or to enjoy such social intercourse as exists.

The *aphangak* is supposed to hunt, travel, garden, and carry on more or less his old life, but of course in spirit form, and pursuing only spiritual essences. The spirits of the dead appear to take no interest in the living, nor, beyond causing

uncanny feelings when supposed to be hovering about, do they seem in the least to influence those left behind. Their very names are not mentioned, and every effort is made by the living to forget them.

While the *kilyikhama* appear to be continually endeavouring in some form or other, such as that of an insect or some small animal, to obtain possession of a body, the *aphangak*, on the contrary, have never been supposed to attempt to enter the bodies of the living, with the exception that an indistinct idea seems to prevail that they sometimes seek reincarnation as a new-born child. This theory, however, is by no means analogous to that of the transmigration of the soul, of which the Indian knows nothing, but presupposes an occasional attempt, sometimes successful, to oust the spirit that would naturally belong to the child at birth.

An Indian professes to be able to recognize an *aphangak*, because it retains the same appearance as it had when in the body. It has already been mentioned that the Indian's mind is not trained to think out and formulate his theories in methodical fashion. His theories can only be deduced by carefully sifting and examining a chaotic mass of ideas and traditions, and by comparing them with native customs and superstitions.

For example, an Indian one day informed me that he had heard an *aphangak* coughing as he passed by a little wood in the dark. Observe that he did not say he had seen, but that he had heard the spirit. Being always on the alert for any possible opportunity of studying the native beliefs, I asked him if the spirit was a short one. It may seem strange that I should have questioned him about its appearance when he distinctly said he had only heard it, but in order to elicit information from an Indian, the questioner must understand his mind and habit.

His reply was that it was tall. "A young one?" I suggested. "No, old," he replied. Nothing more was said, but I understood at once that the spirit he professed to have heard was that of a man, known to us both, who had recently died. Had I asked him straight out if he had *seen* it, he would have answered truthfully, "No," and I should have obtained no

further information. Had I said, "Was it so-and-so?" he would have replied, "I don't know." My policy was to find out what was passing through his mind at the time. I had a very shrewd suspicion what it was, but I wanted to see if he would confirm my impression. I knew that the deceased was a tall old man, but if I had asked "Was he tall and old?" I should have received the same reply, "I don't know." That would have meant coming too directly to the point for an Indian; but when I asked whether the spirit was short and young, he concluded that I was thinking of someone else, and his natural turn of mind, imagining that I was in error, forced him to contradict me. In this way I discovered what was in his mind.

If an Indian kills a foreigner or one of another distinct tribe, he is not regarded as a murderer, and he has no fear at all of the spirit of his victim, should they meet in the after-life; the reason given being that he would then be in the midst of his own people, and would thus have no more reason to fear that spirit than when in the body. This tallies with the Indian's idea that the clan and tribal life continue after death.

The soul on leaving the body is supposed to be astonished, and not to realize quite what has happened. It hovers about the village and neighbourhood for a time, generally estimated at one month, after which period the mourning feast takes place. The natives then suppose themselves to be no longer haunted by the deceased's spirit, which they imagine to have left the neighbourhood for good and to have passed to the realms of the dead. They should then cease to be haunted by it, but as many have only a very vague belief in this theory, anything which recalls the departed to their memory produces (under certain circumstances) a fear of its ghost, and therefore they may continue to have uncanny feelings for a long time afterwards.

The personal belongings and animals of the deceased are destroyed at his death, evidently with the idea that they may prove useful to him in the after-life. The reason given by the Indian for doing this is that the ghost would otherwise haunt

the relatives. Now, if the ghost had no interest in these things, why should it do so?

An experience which I had at Riacho Fernandez will illustrate their idea that the dead hover about for a time after dissolution. I was staying one night in an abandoned hut with five Indian companions, remote from any neighbours. In the middle of the night they awakened me, and in accents of fear called my attention to a noise outside. The fire at which we had cooked our meal had been made some twenty feet or so from the hut in which we were sleeping, but it had practically gone out before we retired, and must by this time have been quite dead. The night was pitch dark and there was no wind to speak of, yet I distinctly heard the familiar sound as of an Indian with a palm-leaf fan blowing up the embers of a fire. It seemed so real and sounded so much as though someone had arrived, and was endeavouring to revive the fire, that I was on the point of going out to see what it was, when the Indians pulled me back, and in awestruck whispers told me that it was an *aphangak*. A few days previously I had brought up in my canoe with these same men the greater part of the skeleton of an Indian who had been killed lower down the river by some of the Paraguayan soldiers. He had escaped, mortally wounded, and had evidently died unattended in the place where I found his bones. These I had buried under a castor-oil tree about one hundred yards from the hut in which we were camping, and the Indians evidently associated the blowing up of the fire with his ghost. They were too terrified for me to get any information from them that night. After conversing with them for a short time in whispers, I told them that I was going out to satisfy myself, as the sound of the fanning still continued, and, in spite of their remonstrances, I did so. Finding nothing except that the fire was quite dead, I returned and slept till morning. My companions, however, huddled together, spent, I am afraid, a miserable night.

On the morrow I made further investigation into the cause of the previous night's alarms, and the only possible solution I can give is that it may have been caused by the rubbing together of two boughs. But during the day I elicited much interesting

information from the Indians, which I was afterwards enabled to verify. The souls of the departed are supposed frequently to return to the village where their death has occurred. This appears to take place invariably towards early morning, and the soul, feeling chilly, endeavours to resuscitate the embers of a fire, should it find one. But in the event of the fire being quite dead, it becomes greatly enraged, and scatters the ashes in all directions; and should any unwary Indian afterwards tread upon them, dire calamity would follow. Hence the custom of burying the ashes (see Chapter XVI.). But this appears to follow only if the fire happens to be one belonging to the spirit's immediate connections. They seem to recognize that they have no cause for resentment should the fire belong to others.

That the Indian in his most advanced state believes that the spirit eventually seeks to consort with the main body of its people who have departed this life is made clear from the following incident: I was for many years regarded by the people as a powerful witch-doctor, and I have been informed by them that at one time they seriously came to the conclusion that my presence among them was no longer desirable. They therefore concocted the following plan, which, fortunately for me, they did not carry out, probably because they felt doubtful of their ability to do so successfully. They intended to surround my hut with dry brushwood after they were sure that I was asleep. At a given moment they were to fire this fuel, and then, knowing that I should be blinded by the smoke and confused by the sudden danger, they intended to kill me as I rushed from the flames. But before carrying out this part of the scheme, their plan was to build little huts at suitable distances along the route I usually took to the River Paraguay in the east. They knew that when travelling I always made them prepare a rough shelter to protect me from the sun and weather, whenever time permitted. They concluded that my spirit, wandering about the neighbourhood, would be attracted by these huts, and thus be induced to take the road to the east, their great desire being that my spirit should leave their country. They believed that my own country was in the east, and for this reason they

selected this route. Had they thought I had come originally from any other quarter, they would have prepared the road accordingly. This proves that they thought that my deceased ancestors were located in the east.

It is significant that after the Indians had become attached to me, and had received me as one of their own people, they did not even suggest trying to entice my spirit to leave their country. I refer to the time when I lay in a dying condition, as I supposed, in one of their villages, after the attempt to murder me (see Chapter XXVI.).

They have a similar idea with regard to the souls of the Paraguayan Guarani Indians, who, according to tradition, entered Paraguay from Brazil, at some remote period. The Chaco Indians believe that the souls of these Guaranis retire to the forest country around the great Falls of La Guayra on the Alto Parana, in Brazil, seeking to consort with the souls of their ancestors.

Speaking generally, three ideas seem to prevail regarding the future abode of the soul. The lower type of Indian holds that the *aphangak* continues to wander disconsolately about the country in company with its kindred spirits, while the more intelligent are of opinion that it moves over to the west, to the cities of the dead, already referred to in dealing with their origin. A few, however, hold a view similar to that prevailing among the Southern tribes—namely, that the dead inhabit a world beneath the earth.

The lower creation, with the exception of fish and serpents, are supposed to share immortality with men. Birds, cattle, and the carnivora, especially of the leading types, figure largely in their beliefs of the shade-world, as also the dog, jaguar, horse, ostrich, and the thunder-bird.

An Indian, in his primitive and heathen condition, will not on any account kill either his dog or his horse, even if from any cause they are in such a condition that it would be a merciful act to do so; and the only time when he will deprive them of life is after the death of the owner.

The chase of the ostrich is one of their favourite pursuits,

but they rub their arrow-points with a particular herb before hunting it, either to propitiate the spirit of the bird, or to give them success in shooting it; and when they are bringing the carcass home they take the precaution to pluck feathers from its breast as they go along, and at certain points throw them aside from the path, in order to deceive the spirit of the ostrich, which they believe pursues the body after its first consternation has passed. Finding the feathers on the wayside, it stops to consider whether that is all of it or not. Then after a zigzag course, as is its custom, it finds the next bunch of feathers, and again pauses to consider. By these delays the hunter is enabled to reach the village without being overtaken by the spirit, and, being a timid bird, it is afraid to enter.

On one occasion I was compelled to shoot a chestnut horse of mine, although the Indians strongly remonstrated. As part of the hide was badly wanted for the repair of my saddle, I was about to set off in the moonlight to skin it, when some of the old women tried to deter me, assuring me that the spirit of the horse would probably meet me on the way and kick me to death.

These few observations will illustrate clearly the Indian's belief in the after-existence of most of the leading species of the lower creation.

The three views as to the location of the departed, together with the rest of their mythological beliefs, prove that the Indian does think and speculate on the question of the future life. There is nothing that he is more interested in than the subject of spiritual beings and the problematic state of the dead.

I have been able to gather only this bare and fragmentary knowledge of their mythology, but that it really represents their theory of the spirit-world I have every reason to believe. At the same time I feel sure that there are many more beliefs held by them, which remain undiscovered.

CHAPTER XIII

DREAMS

Dreams play a very important part in the life of an Indian, and to some extent govern many of his actions. His idea is that during sleep his soul detaches itself from his body, passing out through the chest, and actually does the things that he dreams about. The *kilyikhama* are supposed to be continually hovering round, watching for an opportunity to enter the body during the absence of the soul; and in some cases they co-operate, one seizing the soul, while another takes possession of the body. Dreaming is, therefore, in the opinion of the Indian, an adventurous journeying of the soul, attended by much danger. While the soul wanders, being ethereal, it is able to gratify its desires more freely than if it were in the body. The satisfaction which it derives in doing so, however, being incorporeal, is trifling in comparison with that which it enjoys when in the body.

As the Indian looks upon the body only as a house, or an instrument in the hands of the soul, he considers that what he dreams about is in reality a declaration of the will of the soul; and therefore, whenever possible, that will must be gratified through the body. A man is likely to dream about that which occupies his mind most. Dreams are often a mere confusion of many various impressions which have been made upon the mind at different times. As a man thinks, so he is.

The thoughts of an Indian are chiefly centred on the gratification of his physical desires, and he firmly believes that his dreams are to be looked upon generally as warnings and guides to his conduct, or intimations as to what particular course of

action he should pursue. In dreamland, souls are supposed to meet with each other and enact in the spirit what they would in all probability do in the body, if given the opportunity. It is clear that a race holding such theories must be exceedingly difficult of comprehension by Europeans, their actions very apt to be misconstrued and their attitude misinterpreted.

Perhaps I shall best bring home to the reader the attitude of the Indian mind towards dreams by giving illustrations of the various ways in which he is influenced by them. The Indian is by no means a truthful person, but even in a heathen state he usually stands by any compact which he makes, and this I have had abundant opportunity of proving. When he fails to keep his contract, it is as often the fault of the European as his. But there is another element unknown to most, which has great weight with the Indian. The following example will serve to show how easily he may be misunderstood by the inexperienced foreigner:

In the early years of my sojourn in the Chaco I contracted with an Indian to remain with me and serve me for six consecutive months. In return for his services he was to receive a horse. He acted very well for six weeks, but one morning he was missing, and on inquiry I found that he had gone off at early dawn to his own village, four days' journey away. I had frequently heard Paraguayans and others say that you could never rely upon an Indian and that it was quite useless attempting to make any contract with him. My own thoughts at this time were that the man had become tired of staying with me or dissatisfied with the work given him. Not only did I resent his leaving without the least warning, but I was also much disappointed at his breaking the contract at all.

Anxious to discover whether I had unwittingly given him cause for offence, and thus been myself perhaps partly to blame, I closely questioned the other Indians. I was told in a matter-of-fact way that the man had gone off because his child was sick, and they seemed surprised at my resentment. On asking them why he had not spoken to me about it, they replied: "He knew very well you would not let him go." I

thought over the matter carefully, and could not make out how he had come to know that his child was sick. No one had arrived who could possibly have brought such news, so I concluded that his fellows had, in giving this excuse for him, tried to deceive me. Some two weeks afterwards a visitor arrived from this man's village. I inquired of him about the child, and he informed me that there was nothing wrong. This convinced me that my surmises were correct.

About a month afterwards, however, the man returned, apparently in perfect good-humour, and proceeded quite as a matter of course to resume his duties. I challenged him about his late conduct. He had heard that I had been angry about his leaving, but his attitude was that of a man who had been unjustly accused. He told me that he did not want to leave me, that he had promised to work for me for six months, and that he never intended to break his word. When questioned about his child, he admitted that he left because he had thought the child was ill, but it was not. He had felt tired after his journey, and found it necessary to do some gardening, but he had now returned to complete his contract. Apparently he did not in the least realize that he had done anything wrong. It was not until long after that I learnt he had made this journey because he had dreamed that his child was sick.

To illustrate the native belief that souls meet with each other in dreamland, and the theory of intention connected therewith, I give an account of an interview I once had with an Indian. This man arrived at my village from a place about one hundred and fifty miles off. He asked me for compensation for some pumpkins which I had recently stolen from his garden. I was thoroughly surprised, and told him I had not been near his village for a very long time, and so could not possibly have stolen his pumpkins. At first I thought he was joking, but I soon perceived that he was quite serious. It was a novel experience for me to be accused by an Indian of theft. On my expostulating with him, he admitted quite frankly that I had not taken the pumpkins. When he said this I was more bewildered still. I should have lost patience with him had he not been

evidently in real earnest, and I became deeply interested instead.

Eventually I discovered that he had dreamed he was out in his garden one night, and saw me, from behind some tall plants, break off and carry away three pumpkins, and it was payment for these that he wanted. "Yes," I said, "but you have just admitted that I did not take them." He again assented, but replied immediately, "If you had been there, you would have taken them," thus showing that he regarded the act of my soul, which he supposed had met his in the garden, to be really my will, and what I should actually have done had I been there in the body.

The theory that the act of the soul, perceived through dreams, would actually be the intention of the person in the body is exemplified very fully in the motives which prompted an Indian named Poit to attempt my murder (see Chapter XXV.).

This doctrine of intention has been found very useful indeed in teaching Christianity, the more so because the Indian holds to exactly the same doctrine even when unconnected with dreams, and this idea is forcibly brought out in the execution of Poit. The Indian executes for murder; I was not murdered, but the Indians, on being questioned as to the extreme measures they took, justified their act on the ground that it was by mere chance that Poit had not killed me. The fact that I escaped did not in the least mitigate his act, for his intention was clearly to compass my death.

As an illustration of the way in which dreams influence them in the pursuit of their physical desires, I will give one of the many instances which occur frequently in Indian life. While sleeping in an Indian village, one morning I awoke long before the first light, and noticed a number of men sitting round a fire engaged in animated conversation. Joining the party, I found that they were laying plans for a hunting expedition. The night before I had heard nothing of such a project. I found that they were proposing to sally forth to some open plains some distance to the north, where they expected to find ostriches. While listening to the conversation, I gathered that

one of the men had just had a dream, and in it had seen ostriches in that district. The reader has been told how particularly fond of ostrich flesh the Indian is, and how the feathers are coveted as a personal ornament, as well as for their value as barter, so he will not be surprised that the dreamer had a keen and interested audience. So firmly were they convinced that they would find this game that they were then arranging for the hunt as soon as day dawned, and were so excited over it that further sleep was out of the question.

Witchcraft would almost cease to exist were it not for their superstitions, supported by their dreams. A few examples will suffice to explain this statement, but it is necessary first to remark upon their habits at night. In all my experiences I have never yet spent a night in an Indian village when all the occupants were asleep at the same time. For this there are many reasons, which are given elsewhere. The point which I want to bring out is that during the sleeping hours conversation between a few sitting round the fires is carried on in an ordinary tone of voice. Nocturnal sounds, such as wolves howling, the cry of birds, the rustling of the wind, and the hundred and one strange noises of the tropical night in a primeval land, as well as ordinary actions, such as the sharpening of arrow-points, chopping wood, pouring out water, all serve to act as suggestions to the sleepers, and doubtless in many cases give rise to dreams connected with such things. It is well known that the mere whispering of a few words in a sleeper's ear may induce a dream corresponding with their import.

The Indians suffer from rheumatism and other complaints, consequent upon their exposed life; and their habit of eating chiefly in the evening, because the game which they hunt down is not brought home until the close of day, gives rise not only to frequent nightmare, but also, it must be admitted, to the pains of indigestion. We can quite understand how a pain which would scarcely be felt in the full activity of the body by a man while engaged in the day's pursuits, may produce an acute sensation in the brain during the hours of sleep. A feeling, for example, of a sharp rheumatic pain in the leg or arm,

coupled with the fact that the Indian's mind is steeped in superstition, might very possibly occasion a dream such as the following, which was recounted to me by an Indian.

A spirit appeared in the form of a horned beetle, and, flying round the sleeper several times, eventually entered his body in the vicinity of the knee. The pain of its entrance was distinctly felt. The sleeper, awakening, noticed no mark or other sign of injury. The pain, however, was still slightly felt. What explanation could there be, according to the Indian's way of thinking, except that an actual beetle had entered, possessed by a spirit? The fact that no opening was to be seen was attributed to the power of the spirit. The aid of the witch-doctor was at once called in, and he extracted the beetle by means of suction, and actually showed it to the sufferer and others. That no wound was caused in the extraction was explained by the doctor's power of sorcery. Thus the Indian's belief in dreams is strengthened, and his superstitions gain force as well.

On another occasion an Indian dreamt that he was eating a *kala* (water-fowl), and said that on waking he had heard the screeching of these birds in the swamp near by. In the morning he informed his neighbours that his young child, which was with its mother at another village, had been awake most of the night. A superstition prevails that a man who has a young child should not eat this bird, because, if he does, his child will be sleepless during the succeeding night. In this case it is evident that the cry of these water-fowls in the night had given rise to his dream, and, holding this superstition, he concluded that, as in spirit he had eaten of it, so his child that night had suffered for his rash act.

One more instance will suffice to show how their dreams work in conjunction with their superstitions. An Indian dreamed that, feeling thirsty, he went to a well near by to get some water in the night, and had seen coming towards him the ghost of an aunt of his, leaning upon a stick, and with her otter-skin cloak wrapped tightly round her shoulders. He awoke in terror, and communicated his dream to some of the others. The whole village was soon awake, and, filled with superstitious dread, they

A Lengua Witch-Doctor

The face shows the chief qualification, viz. deceit. A witch-doctor is also recognized by his unkempt condition, dirt, and ragged blanket.

In the Forest

Extracting water from the "caraguata" plant. From the formation of its leaves it catches and holds rain-water for many weeks. The leaves are protected by a row of thorns, thus preventing animals from drinking.

crowded together, being afraid to sleep again that night. One of the old men, with gourd and chant, endeavoured to scare off the ghost. The suggestion for the dream, in this case, may not be far to seek. The memory of his aunt's death was fresh with him. It is possible that while he slept, some of his fellows, as they sat round a fire conversing, may have referred to the place where she died, or to some other circumstance which reminded him of her. His going to the well for water may have been prompted by a feeling of thirst, or the sound of someone pouring out water from a jar, or even by someone asking if there was water to be had. It will be observed that not only the man himself believed in his dream, but that all the people with him were convinced that the ghost must have been in the vicinity, else he would not have dreamed of it.

The uneasy conscience of the Indian adds fear to his dreams, as is shown by the following incident. I was travelling with seven men in the direction of the Kyoinamyip clans, but on arriving at the River Verde we found it so swollen, and the neighbouring country so flooded, that progress was difficult. I therefore decided not to continue my journey, but to content myself with visiting a large village about fifteen miles farther on, where a feast was being held. I arranged to leave five men at the river, and to proceed with the other two. After selecting these two, I was surprised to find that one refused to go. On inquiring the reason, the others informed me that two men at the village intended to kill this man, and that therefore it was unsafe for him to proceed. I accordingly chose another in his place. The people, although many of them were intoxicated, gave me a hearty welcome, and pressed me to stay with them. But I told them that I had left some of my party behind, and being curious to discover whether there was any truth in the report that they wished to kill the man in question, I mentioned the names of those left behind. As far as I could see, there appeared to be no sign of ill-will, and far less of any contemplated violence.

Some days later I learnt that the statement had been made to me on the strength of a dream, and I sought a favourable

opportunity to elicit further particulars. I eventually found out that the man whose life was supposed to be threatened had got into grave trouble about a year previously over a marriage question. Having heard during the evening that I intended going to that same village, and had selected him as one of my companions, he evidently recalled the evil he had done the year before, and, realizing that it merited punishment, was visited by a dream naturally connected with that subject.

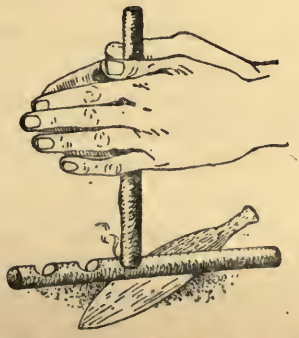
Only one point of any importance in the matter of dreams remains to be illustrated, and this is the danger to which the soul is supposed to be liable when it wanders from the body. The following dream was related to me by one of our most intelligent Indians. A man of his acquaintance woke up with a great start, and was so terrified that for a time he could not explain the reason of his fear. Eventually it transpired that as he dreamed, his spirit had moved only a little way from the village, when it was seized by a gigantic *kilyikhama*. He saw several of them near, and he noticed that one (a smaller one) ran quickly to where he had left his body. He—that is, his soul—was carried for some distance, but finally, on the edge of a forest, he managed to escape, and, trembling with fear, rushed back to the village. What happened subsequently he could not tell, as at this juncture he awoke.

It is believed that sometimes a *kilyikhama* actually does enter the body, the soul having been carried to a distance by a co-operating *kilyikhama*, where it is left. Fearing that the other evil spirit has taken possession of its body, it dare not return, and has to await the signal from the witch-doctor, in the form of a particular chant, announcing that the usurping *kilyikhama* has been cast out, and that it is therefore safe to return. It must be remembered that, according to the Indian, the absence of the soul from the body during a dream does not imply that the body is lifeless; on the contrary, physical and mental life still continue. Apparently, therefore, he holds that he is composed of a threefold combination—body, mind, and spirit—although he is not able to explain the phenomenon. And how the body, when taken possession of by a *kilyikhama*,

is able to give notice of the fact to the witch-doctor, I have never been able to ascertain. It seems to be contradictory, and the very idea is ludicrous—a man sitting up in full strength and vigour, apparently in doubt as to whether he is himself or not, and asserting that his soul is at a distance.

Occasionally it would seem that no sooner does the soul emerge from the chest (why the chest I am not able to explain), than it is at once seized upon by a *kilyikhama.* I have myself seen an Indian graphically imitate the manner in which the *kilyikhama* are supposed to hover over the sleeping form, and wait for the soul to issue from the chest of the sleeper, as it goes forth seeking adventures. Such dreams as this, I suppose, are the result of a strong imagination, influenced by deep-seated superstitious belief.

This account will enable the reader to realize that the life of an Indian is not, after all, the free, thoughtless, unburdened and happy existence which he is often supposed to lead; and further, that his religious views, if I may so call them, are not, even for him, the most suitable and best. The fair-minded reader will, with very little effort, be able to understand what an inexpressible relief it must be to an Indian to have his mind enlightened to such an extent that he no longer lives in a state of constant supernatural dread. This relief, among others, it has been one of the Mission's privileges to bring to him.



LENGUA METHOD OF PRODUCING FIRE.

CHAPTER XIV

SUPERSTITION

Most of the Indians' superstitions have an underlying stratum of fact, although they do not perceive it, and simply give them credence without inquiring further. For example, when the south wind blows they take off their blankets and shake them, doing this, they say, in order to shake out the sickness which they think it brings. The Indian does not understand the connection between the south wind and sickness, and yet in reality the facts tally with what he believes. North and south are the most prevalent winds in this region. To the north is the practically unpeopled waste of Matto Grosso, and the equally sparsely populated northern Chaco. There are, therefore, in this direction, no centres of population where diseases such as measles, small-pox and influenza could originate. The settlements of any consequence in which they are propagated lie to the south-east.

Although disease germs may not be carried a great distance by the wind, nevertheless the Southern Indians and those along the river to the south-east contract these diseases from the whites ; they spread among these tribes, and eventually reach the Indians in the Paraguayan Chaco. Thus these diseases, whether by direct contact or through germs carried by the wind, have really reached them from the south. Furthermore, the south wind is cold, and striking upon their indifferently-protected bodies, subjected for long periods to tropical heat, it produces the various complications following upon chill.

The Indian suffers also very frequently from gumboils. He attributes their origin to the eating of fat, of which he is

inordinately fond. There is some truth in this. The eating of fat upsets their digestive organs, and this in turn acts harmfully upon any weak spot in their teeth.

They have a habit of rubbing the knees and ankles of their children with the grease of the ant-bear and the ring-tailed bear. This they do in order to make their legs strong, and undoubtedly the rubbing, not to mention the grease, may have some good effects.

At various periods they make paint marks upon their bodies, unconnected with mere ornamentation. These marks have reference to physical conditions.

Mothers are forbidden to eat vegetables of a certain crude shape, as they are supposed to have a bad effect. Also they are not allowed to partake of soup made from the heads of animals, and young children are forbidden to eat of young meat such as veal.

Milk, whether of the cow, goat, sheep, or mare, is never drunk. The older people seem to consider it unfit for them, and children are forbidden it because it is supposed that the milk upon which they are nourished will influence them physically as well as in character, and the Indians have no desire that their children should in any way acquire the natures of such animals.

The sensitive plant, if secreted in the food, is believed to have the remarkable power of producing love of home. If you want a man to be attached to you and always to remain with you, try and induce him wittingly to eat of this plant. If he does, you can rest assured you have accomplished your object.

I remember that one day the Indians were discussing the probability of my leaving them after a time, and returning to my own country for good. This they were very much averse to, and pressed me very hard to eat some of the sensitive plant. I took a little just to please them, and they then triumphantly informed me that we should always be comrades, and that if I went away at any time with a view to living in my own country, I should grieve so much after them that I should be forced to return and dwell with them.

Occasionally an Indian falls out with his companions and goes off in a huff, intending to travel to some distant village. Should they not desire this, one of them will follow the man, and, on finding a certain plant by the wayside, will pick it and throw it over his shoulder. Having done this, he returns firmly convinced that the man will stop and turn back. In the case of the sensitive plant, its peculiarity of seeming to have a power of feeling probably caused them to adopt it as a charm.

They have many other amulets, some of which I know slightly, but it would be tedious to describe them all. Two or three, however, may be worth mentioning. Manuscripts and printed paper, when obtainable, are preserved in order that they may make charms relating to us, writing being in their eyes our special symbol. In hunting they use various plants as charms, which they either carry on their persons or rub on their weapons. They sprinkle the blood of a duck in order to procure rain. They wear a red head-covering for hunting the deer, as it arouses the curiosity of that animal and facilitates stalking. Wax images of animals they also use as charms in hunting.

When a man expresses a desire for rain or for a cool south wind, his neighbours, if they do not share the desire, protest strongly, and implore him not to persist in his wish. They always considered that I had particular power in influencing the south wind, and believed that by whistling or hissing I could bring it up at will. This probably was owing to the fact that Europeans welcome this wind as a pleasant change from the exhausting heat. When a sudden rain-storm rises, they wait until it has almost ceased, and then, as it were, pushing it away with their hands, they cry out vigorously, "Whay! whay!" It is very common to hear a woman cry out to a man, "Iwatikap!" (Blow it away!). On a cloudy day, when the sun has been obscured for some time, an old man is sometimes seen to take a firebrand and hold it up to the sun, apparently with the intention of encouraging the luminary to show his face again. This is perhaps connected with the idea of the Peruvian Indians,

who, when the sun s obscured, think that he is angry, and is turning away his face from them.

The Milky Way is supposed to be the path of the *kilyikhama*. There some of them, in the form of large white birds, are believed to wait their opportunity to descend upon and enter into the bodies of men. To the Milky Way also pass the stones used in burial rites (see Chapter XVI.).

Whirlwinds are believed to be the passing of spirits, and the Indian throws sticks at them in order to drive the spirit away. Dobrizhoffer remarks that the Abipones threw ashes in the path of the whirlwind, that it might be satisfied with food.

The sun and moon, when they set, are supposed to have gone in search of food.

Some hold that when the moon is red, it has seen a crime of blood, and takes that hue in order to rebuke the perpetrators. Years after the massacre in Tierra del Fuego of Captain Fell, of the South American Missionary Society, and his party, the Yaghan Indians related how, shortly after the crime, the moon appeared of a blood-red colour, and they connected this phenomenon with the deed they had committed.

The moon is also supposed to be associated with marriage, the young girls addressing the new moon with the appeal, "Moon, moon, I want to get married."

The solar halo is believed to indicate that a battle is in progress on the frontiers, and that much blood is being shed.

The Pleiades are known by two names — *apasmamaap* (holders together), and *lantebiam* (mounting in the south). Their rising is connected with the beginning of spring, and feasts are held at this time, generally of a markedly immoral character. Dobrizhoffer, in writing of the Abipones of the Southern Chaco, says: "After long and frequent consideration, it appears most probable to my mind that the savages derived the knowledge and the worship of the Pleiades from the ancient Peruvians, who are said to have adored . . . the Pleiades, whom they called Colcà." He goes on to say that they regarded "the Pleiades as the representation of their grandfather the devil."

This Jesuit had spent seven years among these Indians, but as I have spent twenty, continually associating with them on the most intimate terms, I shall take the liberty of making a few remarks upon this assertion. The term "grandfather" is often used amongst the Indians, generally as applying to a distant ancestor. In this particular part of the Chaco it is quite as common to address a person of distinct race and of superior standing as *aksak*. We missionaries are so addressed by them. But they only apply the term to those with whom power and authority are supposed to rest. Evil spirits are referred to also as *aksak*. But, what is most important of all, they term the creator beetle *aksak*. It almost amounts to this: *aksak*, although literally "a thing," can be used as the title of a person, and when so used it implies something beyond us which we do not quite grasp and understand. I have never known the Indians refer to the Paraguayans in this way, nor to traders, surveyors, or ordinary settlers. It connotes something special. *Aksak wañam*, which is literally "the old thing," is also a term used for something great and particular, and I have heard it used to signify someone great and ancient. It is possible, therefore, that the Indians, in referring to their "grandfather the devil," were in reality thinking of some powerful but little understood personality belonging to a remote period; and, as they consider that the Pleiades represented him, they doubtless conceived him as a being of great antiquity. They must have observed the Pleiades for centuries, and their likening their grandfather to such an object implies that they revered him as a being of great might and power. In my own opinion, the statement of Dobrizhoffer that the Abipones looked upon themselves as the descendants, or, it may be, the creation, of their "grandfather the devil," is nothing more nor less than the widespread tradition that man was created by the beetle, and therefore their originator, instead of being a devil, was rather a creating god.

I have heard from a few Indians a remarkable theory that among the stars there are countries similar to their own, with forests and lakes. The Indian has no idea of astronomy, and

I can think of only two possible explanations of this theory. One —that they have a childlike notion that the sky is solid, and is, as it were, a continuation of the earth; the other, which is much more probable, that these Indians either had traditions, or had received a detailed account from other Indians of some wonderful mirages in remote countries. Mirages are certainly to be seen in the Chaco, but not of a kind which would give rise to such an idea as this.

The rainbow is held by some to be symbolic of some serpentine monster. When seen in the west or north-west, the Indian will not handle sharp instruments, such as a knife or axe, for fear of being hurt. It is true he knows that the rainbow indicates a break in the weather, but, generally speaking, his idea of the rainbow is that it is a sign of calamity. It is possible that this belief may have come down to them in connection with the story of the Flood, but, as I have discovered no definite tradition of the Flood, and as it is difficult to conjecture what relation cutting instruments would have to it, I incline rather to another more likely explanation. The standard of the Incas of Peru was a rainbow. Everything points to the fact that the Inca legions frequently waged war with the Chaco tribes, and the association, therefore, of the rainbow with sharp cutting instruments and a serpentine monster has at the least a claim to probability. The Incas had a large, well-trained army. Military roads, parts of which exist to the present day, were made for their convenience. But on the frontiers of the Chaco no such roads have ever existed. The troops would be compelled, by the nature of the country, to travel in a long-drawn-out line, and as these paths would, owing to physical obstacles, be of a winding nature, the symbolism of the serpentine form, in connection with the rainbow standard, seems natural and appropriate.

Mention has been made of the spirit of the horse. In keeping with this idea they have a superstitious dread of horse's bones. A native does not like even to handle them. One Sunday morning, while walking with our first Indian convert, Philip, I was conversing with him about their superstitions, and

endeavouring to ascertain how far his acceptance of Christianity had overcome his superstitious fears. After a short time he left my side suddenly, and stood a little way from the path. His manner struck me as strange, and on joining him I found him standing on a heap of horse's bones. He neither shook nor seemed inclined to move, until I asked him for an explanation. Pointing to the bones beneath his feet, he said: "I no longer fear that which my people fear." In this way, by alluding to one superstition, he signified that he had ceased to be influenced by any of them.

In a wild region like the Chaco, it is not surprising that strange and weird sounds are heard, especially at night, some, too, being quite inexplicable. One in particular is the sound as of people whispering in the woods. This has been heard by Europeans and Indians alike. According to their description, it is exactly as if a group of men were in hiding and concocting some plot in low whispers. All agree that the sounds are remarkably human. The Indians' theory of this is that the travelling spirits of the Spaniards enter the woods, when they meet with Indians, and remain there taking observation of them, whispering so as not to attract attention. The Indians in such circumstances admit to feeling eerie, which I can quite believe. But they are not actually afraid, and do not deem it necessary, on account of these sounds, to move their camp, as they certainly would if they thought they were the spirits of their own people.

Infanticide is referred to elsewhere, but as many of the causes leading up to it are based on superstition, I shall touch upon them here. Twins they consider unlucky. Generally, if not invariably, both are put to death. I have remarked that many of their superstitions have a stratum of fact underlying them, and in some cases the superstition appears to have been invented by some astute person, in order to give, as it were, sanction to acts which, from their unnatural character, would otherwise be repugnant to the Indian. In this case it is a natural conclusion that twins would not have the same chance of developing into strong men and women, and it is easy to understand how great

a burden twins would be to an Indian woman leading a precarious and nomadic life. The mother, however, if left to herself, would from natural instinct desire to keep her children even at the risk of being put to inconvenience. In order that the clan may be freed from such a burden, this superstition has evidently been invented to give sanction to infanticide.

An Indian woman, now a Christian and being trained as a nurse in the Mission hospital, gave birth to twins some nine years ago. Although she was favourably inclined to Christianity, her mother was a woman of strong heathen prejudices, and some of the Christian natives at that time had to exercise great precautions lest the grandmother should murder the children, as she certainly would have done if a suitable opportunity had presented itself.

There are two general reasons for infanticide, superstitious support never being lacking. One is that owing to the kind of life the Indians lead, a large infantile population would be a serious hindrance to them, on account of the difficulty of travelling and of procuring suitable food for them. Moreover, it is the custom of the Indian women to suckle their children for three or four years, a custom which was also prevalent in the eighteenth century among the Abipones.

The other reason is that infanticide is mainly perpetrated on female infants and by the old women, who, knowing that their comfort, influence and power depend upon there not being too many of them, make use of this means to limit the number of their own sex. The result is that every girl has a wide selection of partners, and consequently many men have to remain unmarried. If the man of her choice does not treat her well, she simply divorces herself, and has no need to remain long without a husband. The men resent this artificial means of destroying the balance of the sexes, but superstition is strong, and they are powerless to alter matters. A young Indian once said to me: "The women in my country are few, and when there is one to be married, many desire to have her, and we are like vultures disputing over the prey."

It is truly said that "superstition dies hard," and to break

free from it requires a strong effort on the part of the Indian advancing from heathenism to Christianity. But that they succeed in doing so shows that there is latent in them a power capable of development, and it is remarkable how quickly they escape from the thraldom of ages, when once they take the first few steps towards enlightenment. Dreams and ghost-stories and the tricks of the witch-doctors are now topics of good-humoured and mirth-provoking conversation around the fires of those who have become the adherents of the Mission.

One little incident will illustrate the attitude of the Indian Christian's mind towards superstition. A young man, preparatory to concluding the marriage contract with an Indian girl, wished to have some proof of her Christianity. The points he considered essential were that she must cease to use obscene language, must learn to pray, and must no longer be afraid of ghosts. After the lapse of a certain period he put her to the test. From inquiries he found that her language had been faultless; and after hearing her pray, he was satisfied on that point. But the ghost-test was severe. He sent her on a dark night alone to draw water from a swamp, about half a mile away, which she successfully accomplished. When it is considered that a woman seldom, if ever, leaves the village after dark, and, should there be occasion to fetch water at night, she is invariably accompanied by one of the men, it will be seen that this girl's action was courageous.

Had she failed to pass this examination, he would have refused her, although he knew full well that it might be many years before he would have another opportunity of marrying, as any one of his heathen companions would have been only too glad to step into his place.

CHAPTER XV

WIZARDS AND WITCHCRAFT

A WIZARD is one who is endowed above his fellows with natural acuteness, knowledge of the phenomena of nature, insight into character, and with an abnormally developed capacity for roguery.

A Jesuit Father, writing in the eighteenth century about the Indian wizards, says: "There is not one of the savages who does not believe that it is in the power of these conjurors to inflict disease and death, to cure all disorders, to make known distant and future events, to cause rain, hail, and tempests . . . and to handle any kind of serpent without danger . . . credulous savages, who account every new thing which they have never seen before a prodigy, and so attribute it to magic. . . . This simplicity of an ignorant people the crafty jugglers know well how to turn to their own advantage."

Every village has its witch-doctor, whose duty it is to protect his own people from supernatural evil, and by means of his sorceries to avenge them when wronged.

The office of a wizard is not necessarily hereditary, although it does sometimes run in families. Their secrets are jealously guarded, but the greater part of their art is pure deception. Yet they are to a considerable extent the victims of self-deception themselves. They believe that there are other wizards who really possess some powers which they themselves only profess.

Although there are many who claim to be witch-doctors, yet those who really have attained to some distinction in the

profession are not very numerous, and I have only met a few really clever wizards. There is every reason to believe, however, from statements of their own and of others, that at one time the witch-doctors possessed more knowledge than they have now.

The training necessary to qualify an Indian to become a witch-doctor consists, in the first place, in severe fastings, and especially in abstention from fluid. They carry this fasting to such an excess as to affect the nervous system and brain. Certain herbs are eaten to hasten this stage. They pass days in solitude, and, when thoroughly worked up to an hysterical condition, they see spirits and ghosts, and have strange visions. It is necessary, furthermore, that they should eat a few live toads and some kinds of snakes. Certain little birds are plucked alive and then devoured, their power of whistling being supposed to be thus communicated to the witch-doctor. There are other features in the preliminary training which need not be mentioned, and when the initiatory stage has been satisfactorily passed, they are instructed in the mysteries under pledge of secrecy. After that their future depends upon themselves.

It is unquestionable that a few of these wizards understand to a slight degree the power of hypnotism. They appear at times to throw themselves into a hypnotic state by sitting in a strained position for hours, fixing their gaze upon some distant object. In this condition they are believed to be able to throw their souls out—that is, in order to make them wander. It seems that occasionally, when in this state, they see visions which are quite the opposite of those they had desired. At other times they content themselves with concentrating their attention for a while upon one of their charms, and I have no doubt that occasionally they are sincere in desiring to solve some perplexing problems.

One of the chief duties of the wizard is to arrange the weather to suit his clansmen. If they want rain, it is to him they apply. His sorceries are of such a kind that they may be extended over a long period. He is never lacking in excuses, and so, while apparently busy in combating the opposing forces which are

hindering the rain, he gains time to study weather signs. He will never or rarely venture an opinion as to the expected change until he is nearly certain of a satisfactory result. Any other Indian could foretell rain were he to observe signs as closely as does the wizard. The killing of a certain kind of duck, and the sprinkling of its blood upwards, is his chief charm. When he is able to procure this bird he is sure that rain cannot be far off, because these ducks do not migrate southwards until they know that there is going to be water in the swamps. These swamps are filled by the overflowing of the rivers as much as by the local rainfalls, and the presence of water in the rivers and swamps soon attracts rain-clouds.

The wizards also observe plants and animals, study the sky, and take note of other phenomena, and by these means can arrive at fairly safe conclusions. They are supposed to be able to foretell events, and to a certain extent they succeed so far as these events concern local interests. By judicious questioning and observation the astute wizard is able to judge with some amount of exactitude how certain matters are likely to turn out.

After we had introduced bullock-carts into their country, the people were naturally interested in the return of the carts from their periodical journeys to the river. When the wizards had calculated carefully the watering-places, and had taken into consideration the state of the roads, the character of the drivers, and the condition and number of the bullocks, all that they then required to know was the weight of the loads, and the day on which it was expected that the carts would leave the river on their return journey. The last two items they had to obtain from us. When they had these data, by a simple calculation they could make a very shrewd guess, not only at the time when they might be expected to arrive at the village, but also at what particular part of the road they might happen to be on any given day. A great impression was made upon the simple people by this exhibition of power, but when we discovered what they were doing, we withheld the information, or only gave them part, with the result that their prophecies either

failed ignominiously or proved very erroneous. Their reputation accordingly began to wane.

These sorcerers are held to have the power of raising storms. One man was reported to have been the author of very disastrous rains, and some Indians were recounting to me his wonderful powers. I asked them if they thought that it was really he who brought about the torrential rains, and they unhesitatingly answered in the affirmative. I then remarked that it was strange that this very witch-doctor had suffered serious inconvenience in his own hut from this rain, and that furthermore his garden was practically ruined. "Now," I said, "when he engineered that storm, why did he not arrange that it should not afflict him?" The Indians looked surprised, as my remark seemed reasonable, and they replied, "Nokso" (True). "We never saw it in that light."

The wizards appear to be authorities on agricultural matters, and when application to the garden spirit has failed, the witch-doctor is called in. He examines the crop, and if he thinks it is likely to be a poor one, he says it is being blighted by an evil spirit, but that he will use what sorceries he can to preserve it. If, on the other hand, he has reason to believe that the crop will be a good one, he spits upon it here and there, and then assures the people that now they may expect a good harvest.

Some of the chief duties of the witch-doctor consist in laying ghosts, driving off spirits, exorcising *kilyikhama* in cases of possession, assisting wandering souls back to their bodies, and generally in the recognizing of spirits. When a ghost is supposed to haunt a village, the wizard and his assistants have sometimes an hour's arduous chanting, in order to induce the restless one to leave. When he considers that he has accomplished this, he assures the people that it is done, and this quiets their fears. Evil spirits frequenting a neighbourhood have also to be driven off by somewhat similar chanting.

Persons, when supposed to be possessed by *kilyikhama*, sometimes give the witch-doctor really serious work to do, and in these cases he is as full of fear as the rest of the people. I have never seen a case of possession, such as the Indians believe in,

or one at all resembling the supposed cases of possession, which are said to be met with in China; but I will quote an ordinary case with which I had to deal. One day I heard a great uproar in the village. On inquiring the cause, I was informed that a woman was possessed by *kilyikhama*. I went to the scene of the disorder, and found her stretched on the ground, throwing herself about violently. Four men were holding her down by the limbs, while the wizard was bending over her, trying to drive out the spirits. I at once saw it was simply a case of hysteria. Bidding the wizard desist from his performances, and telling the people that I had a potent drug which would very soon restore the patient, I returned to my hut, and brought back with me some strong liquid ammonia. As soon as I applied a liberal dose to her nose on a handkerchief, the effect was instantaneous, much to the astonishment of the people.

A short time afterwards the wizard sought me out privately and asked me to give him some of that wonderful medicine. I gave him a sniff of the bottle with the cork right out, and the effect was almost more marked than in the case of the woman. He was nearly overbalanced from the shock. I asked him if he would like to take some with him, but, as soon as he could speak, he emphatically declined. I think he ceased to wonder why the spirits left the woman so quickly.

Dreamers also frequently require the wizard's help, especially when the wanderings of their souls have been interrupted by unfriendly spirits. Having to deal so much with ghosts and spirits, he is supposed to be able to recognize their presence at all times, and to distinguish and describe them by the aid of the bright metal ear-discs which he wears, as he is thought to be able to see the shadows in these mirrors as they pass.

On my return from my first furlough, I brought out a few hideous masks with which to amuse the younger boys. At first they eyed them with suspicion, but soon took to them, realizing what an amount of fun they could get out of them. Shortly after this a very famous wizard paid a visit to the village. The lads, who had attended school for some time, and had lost a good deal of their natural fear of the witch-doctors, desired to

play a prank on the distinguished visitor. Dressing themselves up, and wearing the masks, they hid in the vicinity of our house. Then one of their number, in ordinary attire, went to the village and informed the wizard that I wished to speak to him. He came down unsuspectingly, and suddenly encountered five weird masked figures. For one moment he was paralyzed with fear, but almost in the next he was back in the village. Great was the mirth of the boys, and they roguishly remarked how strange it was that the wizard, "Blue Blanket," an expert at recognizing spirits, should be so terrified when he met them.

At Thlagnasinkinmith I built a high palm fence round part of my hut in order to keep out the dogs while I was sun-drying meat. I was sitting inside this enclosure at a fire with a number of men conversing on diverse topics, and chanced to have my alarum-clock with me. A young witch-doctor, having some chanting to do, coolly came and stood up against my fence and began his dismal task. I told him to move farther off, as it interrupted our conversation, but he paid no attention. I therefore decided to remove him by other means, and, setting the alarum a few minutes ahead, I slipped it unnoticed behind the fence. His chant waxed louder and more vigorous, when suddenly off went the alarum. He dropped his gourd, and with a cry of fear ran off to the village.

Some of the methods practised by the wizards are gruesome and revolting. The treatment of the dead will be dealt with in the following chapter, but there are many other occasions on which they resort to practices of an exceedingly repulsive kind.

In certain cases of sickness, sucking is the recognized cure. By long practice they develop a power of suction which is quite surprising—in fact, it amounts to much the same as cupping. If an Indian spits blood owing to overstraining himself or through some internal injury, he is always in fear that it may result in death. For want of skilful medical treatment such cases sometimes end fatally, but they attribute this entirely to the hæmorrhage, of which they have an inherent dread.

The wizards make capital out of this, and, when angry, threaten the people that they will cause them to die from internal bleeding. To prove his power, he shows how he can produce this bleeding in himself at will without any harmful effect, but pictures the terrible consequences that will ensue if he produces it in them.

He strikes his head and breast several times, and, looking diabolically fierce, he throws up apparently a mouthful of blood, which he catches in his hand and rubs upon his naked chest. The native is filled with terror at the sight, not knowing that it is but a simple trick. The witch-doctor has previously secreted in his mouth certain forest seeds, and, after having delivered his oration, as if exhausted by it, he calls for a drink of water, taking care to retain in his capacious mouth a fair quantity. This is coloured by the seeds, and the contents, when spat out, very closely resemble frothy blood.

In skin eruptions, such as small-pox, measles, and the like, they open the pustules with a sharp-pointed instrument, not infrequently a knife. They then wipe it on their bare arm or leg, and have no scruple in using the same instrument immediately afterwards in cutting their food. Is it any wonder that such diseases spread so rapidly among them?

They have many other revolting practices, but decency forbids the mention of them. It is utterly impossible to give an exhaustive account of these primitive people, as so many of their customs are unfit for discussion.

Much of their witchcraft is pure trickery; a few of them have the rudiments of the conjuror's art, although, as a rule, their deceptions are very clumsily worked. The people are so credulous and unsuspicious that the wizards do not find it necessary to acquire any great skill.

I was once told by the Indians that a very celebrated wizard had arrived. They recounted many of his wonderful deeds, one of which was that he could, by striking his head, produce a number of small creeping things, such as live slugs, caterpillars, and beetles. When I doubted their statements, they solemnly assured me that they had seen it done. I said: "Well, go to

the village and tell him to come to me, and if he can do as you say I will give him a handsome present." Jealous for the reputation of their wizard, and fully believing that he could do what they had described, they hastened off.

I was somewhat surprised to see him appear. I asked him, before the crowd which had eagerly gathered round to witness the overthrow of my scepticism, if he could perform this wonderful feat. Without hesitation he replied in the affirmative, and I bade him proceed. Striking an attitude, he smote his head two or three times with one hand, with the other compressing his stomach and working upwards. He then put his hand to his mouth, ejected quite openly several live things into his palm, and held them out for us to see. There lay the creeping, wriggling insects, and a look of triumph was clearly distinguishable upon his face. The onlookers were filled with mixed feelings of pleasure, satisfaction, and fear. All looked expectantly at me. Rising, I clapped him on the back, told him he was a clever fellow, and gave him the present I had promised. He was delighted.

I then insisted on his sharing some of my food, which he did not seem too keen to do; but I persisted, and in the midst of the admiring throng he had no alternative but to consent. He took a large mouthful, and while he was endeavouring to masticate the food, looking at him straight in the face, I said presently: "That was a clever thing you did just now; you must really show me it again;" but he only turned on his heel and went away. It was plain that he had some more live insects in his mouth, and they had evidently become mixed with the food. He would have had to swallow it, or otherwise have been discourteous to me. Swallowing the food would have meant swallowing the insects and slugs as well, so he assumed offended dignity and strode away.

This reminds me of an interview I had with another wizard. Curious to know how they actually did their tricks, I feigned having a pain in my arm, and sent for old "Red head." Believing me to be in earnest, he proceeded to spit upon and then suck my arm. After a time he produced three small fish-

bones, and, showing them to me and those around, asserted that these were the cause of my trouble, adding that they had been caused to enter there by some unfriendly wizard who disliked me. "They are not nice people in the west," he said. "Quite different from us, who love you and are your friends." He then asked for a handful of beads as his fee. Taking him rather unawares, I examined his mouth. He did not seem to realize at first what I was after; but as I pulled out a few more fish-bones, his face lowered, and began to wear a threatening look. I simply showed the bones to the onlookers, and this, with a look, conveyed all that was required; but that witch-doctor hated me for several years afterwards.

We find many specialists in the profession. One witch-doctor of my acquaintance practised as his speciality the extraction of small needles from afflicted Indians. This, of course, was the result of contact with foreigners, and shows that Indian witchcraft is not too rigidly conservative, but advances with the times. This adaptability, however, to changed circumstances often gives rise to serious difficulties. Foreign bodies are extracted by the wizards, but when, for purposes of their own, they desire to afflict their victims with the presence in their bodies of such things as beetles, fish-bones, etc., they can only do so through the aid of the *kilyikhama*. The insertion of needles (made in England) was quite a new development of wizardry, and the question which naturally arose was how this wizard prevailed upon the *kilyikhama* to adopt such a new method of inflicting suffering. I don't suppose, however, that he troubled much about the matter, and his credulous fellow-countrymen evidently raised no critical questions. They suffered pain; he extracted needles. The cause and effect were plain. What need was there for further argument or speculation?

We had remarked for some time that this particular wizard frequently requested us, as a personal favour, to obtain for him several packets of the smallest needles obtainable. He was an ingenious fellow to have invented this new line of business, but our suspicions were aroused. What possible use

could an Indian have for such very small needles? These suspicions were strengthened when, shortly afterwards, a new epidemic, as it were, broke out among the people. "Needles" became the fashionable disease. But we determined to stamp it out. The supply of needles was cut off, and, as no more were obtainable, the malady ceased, and the wizard's lucrative occupation with it.

As witchcraft had such a hold upon the people, and as its influence was unmistakably evil, we set ourselves to oppose it. Mere theoretical opposition to this evil had no effect; it required practical exposure, and this I accomplished whenever an opportunity occurred, but I must confess that my experiments were not always a success.

There is a root, about the size of a large apple, found in the forests, which is supposed by the natives to be a virulent poison, and to cause almost instant death. But the wizards are credited with the faculty of eating it with impunity. Old "Red head" was one of those reputed to be able to eat this deadly root, so I demanded proof of his power. The root was brought and handed to me. I passed it round to the Indians present and requested them to eat a bit, but no one would do so. Furthermore, they scoffed at me for imagining that they would be so foolish as to try. I then handed it to "Red head." He instantly took a large bite without a qualm, chewed, and swallowed it, the Indians looking on with interested awe. I then took it from him, and, after reasoning with myself, came to the conclusion that what he could eat with impunity I could eat also. However, there was just the possibility that it might be poisonous, and that he possessed an antidote. I therefore scanned his face keenly while I prepared to take a bite also. Had he thought that it was really deadly, he would have shown signs of alarm, for I knew full well at that time that it was not convenient to the Indians that I should die under such circumstances. But I saw no such sign, nor even a trace of jealous apprehension. I therefore ate a piece. No evil effects followed, beyond the disagreeable flavour of the root, and no sign of annoyance even was evinced by the wizard, such as he certainly

would have shown had he feared that my action would damage his reputation.

I was surprised at this, but later, in the presence of a number of Indians, I referred to the incident, and said: "You have all feared this root, and have believed that only a witch-doctor could eat of it, and not die; but you saw me eat it, and no harm has come of it." I thought I had scored a great point, but old "Red head," who was present, quietly said: "We were not surprised, because you yourself are a witch-doctor." I had always refused to be considered as such, but, unfortunately, my good intention had simply confirmed the popular belief. I confess that I was chagrined, so I made up my mind to take the first opportunity to aim a telling blow at witchcraft.

About this time there was a rumour of trouble being likely to arise between the Indians and the Paraguayans, but a witch-doctor had given out that his people need not be afraid, as he had power to charm the guns of the Paraguayans, so that their bullets could not wound. I warned them that this statement was not to be relied upon, and that if they came into collision with the Paraguayans, they would certainly find that their bullets would kill. But they seemed to have implicit faith in their wizard's statement.

In order to prevent them from being led foolishly into danger, and still smarting under my late defeat, I told them that I should like to test the witch-doctor's assertion for myself. He came and assured me that his charm would prove quite efficacious. I then turned to the Indians and said, "He believes in his power: let him prove it. Make him stand over yonder, and I will fire at him three times with my Winchester. He can charm bullets, and therefore can come to no harm, and you then will be assured that when you meet the Paraguayans, you will be safe." But my wizard would have none of it, and the people on this occasion were sensible enough to consider prudence the better part of valour.

On another occasion, at the same village, while we were sitting round a fire in a hut with a number of Indians, a witch-beetle came humming in. These witch-beetles are supposed to be sent

by the witch-doctors to enter those whom they desire to destroy. These particular creatures are about an inch and a half in length, black, and horned. In this case it was believed to be either intending to enter one of this party or on its way in search of a victim farther off. A hush fell upon the company, and fear possessed them all. After some difficulty I captured it. Holding it in my hand, to the horror of all, I placed it alive in my mouth, and closed my lips upon it. After a time I took it out and threw it away, triumphantly assuring the people that if it really had the power attributed to it, I had supplied it with a ready-made opening by which to enter.

But they would not be satisfied. They made two objections. The first was, of course, that I was a witch-doctor, and therefore knew how to charm it. The second was that it probably did not want to enter me, its objective being another person altogether. When told that even if such had been the case, the power of the witch-doctor and his associate *kilyikhama* could at least have saved it from this indignity, they seemed unwilling to admit this, one remarking that it might be that their *kilyikhama* had no power over me.

This reminds me of an incident at Waikthlatingmangyalwa, our first Mission-station. A party of visitors arrived late at night, and, it being the dry season, they were extremely thirsty. They asked me to give them water, but I told them that I had only sufficient for my own use in the house, so I offered them a bucket and told them where they could get water some little distance off. They demurred, and told me they could not go, as it was known that at night spirits frequented that spot. I offered to go with them. My reputation as a spirit-scarer by this time was considerable, and they gladly accompanied me. We obtained the water and returned, of course without seeing any sign of a spirit. Anxious to improve the opportunity, I remarked upon the groundlessness of their fears, but they replied, "With you it is different, and you must not think that because the *kilyikhama* in your country are tame, that here they are so also. Our spirits are fierce and dangerous." Again I failed to score an advantage.

Some considerable time after this I heard from the lads a story to the effect that their wizards could, in the presence of a crowd of people, spit pumpkin seeds out of their mouths to a distance, and immediately full-grown ripe pumpkins could be picked up. I did not attempt at this time to explain the trick, but endeavoured to make them think for themselves by putting the following questions: "Why is it that your people, who often suffer from hunger, do not insist upon your witch-doctors providing for your immediate needs in the way you have just described; and still more, how is it that they themselves suffer equally with you the pinch of hunger, when they could so easily improvise a substantial meal? Does it not appear to be power misused, merely to work this miracle now and again to prove what they could do if they would?" This remark, being thoroughly practical, and affecting them on a very tender subject, made considerable impression upon them.

The trick is of the simplest. The witch-doctor's assistants have a few pumpkins secreted beneath their blankets. The attention of the crowd is, of course, fixed upon the performing wizard, and when he spits out the seeds, which of course are never seen again, being lost in the dirt and refuse which is always to be found in abundance in the vicinity of their shelters, the crowd at once begin to look on the ground for the expected pumpkins, which are presently discovered, having been dropped by the confederates, who had intermingled with the people.

I thought one day that if I did a little simple jugglery myself, and then explained to the people how it was done, and could induce some of them to do these tricks themselves, it might bring home to them more clearly than by any other means the way in which they were being duped. Getting together a good audience, I performed for their benefit a number of conjuring tricks, most of them being imitations of those of their own wizards. But the one which seemed to impress them most was the extraction from a dog's tail of a piece of paper after he had eaten it. Wrapping up a piece of fat in a bit of paper, I gave it to a dog, which eagerly devoured it, paper and all, and then, working with my hand along his stomach, I sucked

the paper out of the tip of his tail, and showed it to them. "Á-pó-pái!" cried the onlookers in chorus, unable to restrain their astonishment. The trick was an easy one, which I afterwards explained to them. Tearing out two leaves of cigarette paper, I secreted one in my mouth, wrapping the fat in the other.

Adolpho Henricksen, the founder of this Anglican Chaco Mission, died from the consequences of exposure on the River Paraguay, but I was informed once by the Indians, when they were incensed against me, that I had better be careful, because their witch-doctors had killed him by their sorceries. Taking them at their word, I demanded and obtained compensation all round for the injury done to my tribesman. For a long time afterwards they still maintained that he had been killed by witchcraft, but, not caring to be again fined, the witch-doctors ingeniously denied having done this themselves, and attributed the deed to the wizards of the Caingua, a tribe in the north of Paraguay proper, thus maintaining the reputation of witchcraft and at the same time guarding themselves against further punishment.

About the time when we first succeeded in taking a bullock-cart into the interior, the witch-doctors, it appears, had decided to get rid of me. According to my informants, they feared to lay violent hands upon me, judging that the presence of my enraged spirit in their country would be more troublesome to them than I actually was in the body. Their plan, therefore, was to put me to death by a slow, painful illness, which would cause me to grow thinner and thinner, and for this purpose they had been engaged with their sorceries, so I was told, for fully two months. Old Pinse-apawa was my informant, and he urged me not to risk my life by going inland with the cart. However, when he found that I was determined to go, he said: "Do not tell the witch-doctors that I informed you of what they are doing, but say that a spirit warned you."

I arrived safely with the cart, after encountering many difficulties. I did not deem it wise to make any reference to what I had heard, but could not resist the temptation of making a few remarks which I knew would be exceedingly irritating and

discouraging to my would-be murderers. So, shortly after my arrival, I laid myself out to expatiate upon the great advantages that we should derive now that we had proved the practicability of bringing in provisions by bullock-cart. My colleague, Andrew Pride, and myself, had often been very short of food, and on account of this we were thinner than we cared to be. "But now," I said triumphantly, "you will soon see in what fine condition we shall be." I heard afterwards that the wizards did not enjoy this and other such remarks.

In spite of all the superstition and trickery connected with witchcraft, the wizards possess a certain amount of practical knowledge, and really make use of it. They know of many herbs which they employ as medicines. Unfortunately, some of them are utilized for improper purposes, but others are used advisedly to relieve suffering. The bitter bark of a tree is known to allay fever. The malva, or mallow plant, is used in cleansing wounds, and so are other herbs. They have also a plant which relieves toothache, and others of less or greater efficacy are used in specific diseases. Snake-bite they often succeed in curing, chiefly by suction and by tying a ligature between the wound and the heart. They also have some idea of inoculation for snake-bite, using the fangs very carefully in scratching parts of their bodies. They practise massage with considerable success. Saliva is freely used on wounds, and to stop bleeding they apply clay or earth. They are very accurate in calculating the probabilities of recovery or death, judging principally from the appearance of the eyes.

There is no doubt that these witch-doctors have much more medical knowledge than they are generally credited with, and this incredulity as to their knowledge is owing, I think, to the fact that it is so mixed up with superstition. But it would require a medical man to study their methods, in order to estimate the real extent of their knowledge.

CHAPTER XVI

BURIAL RITES

UNDOUBTEDLY the most gruesome of all Indian customs are those connected with the burial of their dead.

The foreigner when he finds himself alone amongst these Indian tribes, naturally braces himself up in the face of imminent peril; but it is quite another matter when he happens to have the doubtful privilege of witnessing an Indian funeral, with all the horrible rites and weird circumstances that invest it.

A death has taken place; the sun is fast sinking on the horizon. The village, which at noon was stirring with life and energy, is now desolate, save for six or seven solemn and awe-struck Indians, who have been deputed to carry out the last dismal rites. The body lies just outside one of the huts, covered with a reed mat. Presently two men approach, and, removing the matting, they hastily wrap the body in a native blanket. Then, laying it face downwards, they lash a pole along the back, tying it at the neck and heels. Raising their gruesome burden upon their shoulders, in strange procession they wend their way to the forest in the fast fading light.

A grave is hastily dug with wooden diggers, and the body, loosened from the pole, is forced into a sitting posture inside. Haste is necessary, for the sun has already disappeared, and, according to their laws, the funeral ceremony must be concluded before the red glow has died out of the sky, and they have still the last rites to perform.

A scene, weird and revolting as this, I have witnessed on several occasions, but it is not easy to describe to the reader the uncanny feelings which it awakens.

BURIAL RITES

Death is invariably supposed by the Indian to result from the direct influence of the *kilyikhama*, either proceeding from their own desire to injure, or induced through the medium of a witch-doctor. He, of course, never injures, or, at least, is believed never to injure any one of his own party, his business being, on the contrary, to secure them from evil. Anything, therefore, in the nature of sickness or death occurring in his own district is held to be either the direct act of the *kilyikhama* or of some unfriendly wizard from a distance.

The various ways in which sickness and death are supposed to be caused have been already described under the head of witchcraft. When death ensues, the business of the wizard is simply to decide in what part of the body the cause of death is located, and this determines the special rites to be carried out at burial. As long as there is hope of recovery, the wizard and the friends show great kindness to the sufferer, and do all that they can for him, and I have frequently noticed instances of very careful and tender nursing as far as their limited knowledge went. But when once the hope of life has been extinguished, both sufferer, wizard, and friends give up the struggle. The patient is then to a great extent regarded as practically dead, and little further attention is paid to him.

When death seems imminent, the dying person is removed from the village and laid outside, with a mat thrown over him, although he may be quite conscious. They think nothing of his discomfort at this time. The hot noonday sun may be pouring down upon him, aggravating his suffering, or tropical rain may be falling, or perhaps the cold south wind of winter chilling him, but it matters not. Quite close to him preparations are being made for a hasty departure. He sees them, and very often hears the discussions as to how they intend to treat him. This state of consciousness continues sometimes up to actual burial. Can the reader imagine what must be the feelings of this poor deserted creature? No kindly word is spoken to him, no friendly hand holds his, though he is still living, still conscious. Oftentimes he suffers the agonies of thirst, but no one attends to his needs. And yet these Indians are not

unkindly; they grieve for their dying friend; they will miss him and mourn his loss, but their cruel belief overcomes all natural feelings. This has been their system for generations, and no one has cared to teach them a better way.

When the village has been abandoned, those appointed to attend to the funeral rites wait till the last possible moment—that is, about half an hour before sunset—unless the sufferer has actually died sooner. But whether he is dead or not, if there is no possible hope of his living through the night, his funeral begins, in order that it may be completed before darkness sets in.

The rites to be performed alter according to the circumstances of death, but there is never any variation in the purification ceremony, the words at the graveside, the plants laid thereon, and the position of the body in the grave. The burning of the village and the destruction of the property of the deceased are always customary.

In some cases the only peculiar rite is the placing of hot embers beneath the feet of the corpse and on the head. If, however, the seat of trouble has been in the head, after the body has been placed in the grave they batter the skull with clubs; if in the region of the heart, arrows are shot into it, and sometimes a stake is driven through the shoulder and slanting out below the ribs, thus pinning the body to the side of the grave. In the case of dropsy, the body is shot at, and a bunch of herbs is held by the man conducting the burial. This is afterwards burnt, and each of the party swallows some of the smoke.

The meaning of these and many more rites which are used I do not fully comprehend, and I have had opportunities of witnessing only some of them. A very common rite, however, is the cutting open of the side, and the insertion into the wound thus made of heated stones, an armadillo's claw, some dog's bones, and occasionally red ants. The wound is then closed. In cases where haste is necessary, as it always is if the funeral takes place towards sunset, the sick person is not always dead when this operation is performed. In any case, to be efficacious, it

must be performed, if not before actual death, certainly immediately afterwards, and before the spirit is supposed to have left the vicinity of the body.

The stones are thought to have knowledge communicated to them by the soul of the dying or dead person, who, being freed from the limitations of the body, is able to recognize more clearly the originator of his trouble. They are supposed to ascend into the Milky Way, and there remain until they find an opportunity to descend on the author of the evil in the form of shooting stars. Consequently, the Indians are very frightened when they see a falling star. They have all been guilty in their time, or are supposed to have been guilty, of causing some evil to others, and they are never sure when vengeance in this form may be wreaked on them from some distant quarter. Dobrizhoffer, writing of the Abipones, says: "Whenever they see a fiery meteor, or hear it thunder three or four times, they believe that one of their jugglers is dead, and that this thunder and lightning are his funeral obsequies." In all probability the idea of the Abipones was identical with that of the Lenguas of the present day. The armadillo's claw is supposed to burrow under the ground until it finds the culpable wizard, then to enter into and destroy him. Thus he is believed to be attacked at the same time from above and below. The particular parts played by the dog's bones and the red ants I cannot interpret.

These rites having been performed, the body is placed in the grave in a sitting posture, with the face towards the west. Probably this has some connection with their idea that the future home of their people lies towards the West, in the cities of their dead—a fact which has already been touched on in dealing with their possible origin. This custom seems to give weight to their traditional idea of the Western abode of their dead, just as Christians generally place their dead facing the East, as symbolizing the quarter from which they look for their Hope to come. When the grave has been filled with earth, certain plants, some being of the aloe species, are placed above it, and then those who are officiating stand round the grave. The leader points with his finger to each one, and apparently

asks a question, and the others reply; but I was never able to catch what was said, nor could I ever get an explanation.

The only incident tending to throw light on the subject, and which seems to have any reference to this ceremony, concerned an Indian who had been present at the burial of a woman. Some time afterwards, having a quarrel with her relations, he is reported to have said that he had seen their sister, and for this they killed him; nor was it accounted as murder. I could get no clear explanation from the bearers of this story why this man's remark should have given so much offence, and brought him to such a tragic end. All that I could gather was that the man, who knew the woman was dead, and had been present at her funeral, was thought, by making this statement, to throw doubt upon her death and burial, and, from other hints which I have received, the incident seems to have been connected with the form of words used at the grave. The leader of the burial party, I think, takes a statement from each of those present that the funeral has been conducted properly, that all the rites have been duly performed, and that they are direct witnesses that every detail that their customs demand has been fully carried out. Any tampering, therefore, with their laws on these matters was followed by condign punishment, as in the case of this man, who had probably insinuated that the native rites had not been fully complied with.

The following perilous experience, which I met with in the year 1894, while alone amongst the Indians in the interior of the Chaco, at the village of Thlagwakhe, may perhaps throw some light upon this oath-taking, or whatever it may be, at the graveside. An old man, Ataiwañam, had been dying for some days, and eventually expired one afternoon. By this time I had gained considerable authority among the people, as events will show. It was just a few months after I had been successful in saving a child from being buried alive. The Indians invited me to form one of the burial party at the old man's funeral—an invitation denoting great confidence and respect—which I accepted. The funeral was carried out in the ordinary way, without any peculiar atrocities; but I was permitted to have

my way in respect to the size of the grave, which I insisted upon their making larger than usual, in order to avoid such unseemliness as crushing forward the head of the corpse and breaking the neck. They furthermore requested me to say some words. They neither expected nor wanted a Christian address or prayer, but they had an idea that I had a powerful influence with spirits, and a word-charm from me might, they thought, add weight and efficacy to their own ceremonies. Being anxious to take every possible opportunity of introducing Christian ideas among them, I readily agreed. My Lengua was far from clear, as my knowledge of their language was at that time very rudimentary. Being in an excited condition, and the light rapidly fading, they were in great haste to be off, and therefore were in no fit frame of mind to follow my remarks.

So all went well for the time, and we returned to the village. I had already extorted a promise from them that they would not destroy and vacate this village, as was their wont, and had assured them that no harm would come to them. Furthermore, I had dissuaded them from killing the four goats belonging to the old man, although they destroyed his other property. The plan by which I had contrived to save the goats was by offering to exchange them for four of my own. His niece therefore received four goats from me; and I assured them that, if the spirit of the dead man should resent this liberty that we had taken with his property, the trouble would fall upon me, and not on them.

The people had built their shelters on the forest side of my hut, but, although they had promised not to destroy the village nor vacate it, they had taken the precaution to pull down their booths and re-erect them on the farther side of my hut, so that, whatever happened, I, at any rate, should be between them and the ghost, and therefore be the first to suffer.

The witch-doctor, the most intelligent man of the party, had, a week or two previously, under strong persuasion from me, erected for himself quite a superior kind of hut, with a small opening for a door. His wife and family, however, although they did not remove the hut, made very considerable alterations

to it, the chief of which was that they securely blocked up the doorway, making it appear like a part of the wall, and opened a small gap on the opposite side instead. As the old wizard afterwards explained to me, this was done on purpose to puzzle the ghost. He, while in the body, knew the house well, but the alterations were so considerable that it was supposed his ghost would not recognize it, and would be especially nonplussed when it made for the entrance to find it a solid wall.

The village was particularly quiet that night. This was the first time in their history that they had ventured to remain in the same place after a death had occurred, and they naturally felt intensely nervous — in fact, they hardly dared to speak above a whisper. I remained up till about ten o'clock, but, finding things rather dull, I then retired to rest.

It must have been an hour or so after midnight, when I was awakened by a terrible hubbub amongst the people. The few guns they had were being fired off, arrows were whizzing through the air, women were shrieking and beating on the ground with sticks, children crying, dogs barking, and goats and sheep running hither and thither. I wondered what could be the matter, and felt sure that we must have been attacked by enemies. I hastily lit a home-made wax candle, and got from under my net. I had hardly done so before three men rushed into my hut, exclaiming that I was trying to destroy them. For some time I could make nothing of their accusations. They were terribly excited, evidently full of rage, and in a dangerous mood. Eventually they went outside, and I followed.

At the door I met two or three of the younger men, who had been much attached to me for some time. They were calmer, but very serious, and informed me that the ghost of the old man had been seen to enter my hut, and remain there for some time, and then disappear to the north; but who had seen him I could not gather. They moreover informed me that it was believed that when I spoke at the grave, I had communicated with the dead person, and urged him to have an interview with me. This, of course, if true, was a breach of custom, and, in my case, of honour also. My informants further told me that

the people were greatly incensed, and purposed killing me. I could see that they were loath that I should meet with such a tragic end, but it was plain that they also believed I had been juggling with the ghost.

I realized that the moment was extremely critical. It was no good arguing with them in their present excited state, and I saw that my safety lay in keeping as quiet as possible. To attempt flight would have been folly, but I felt that I should be much safer if I could get out of the way for a time. They have a dread of going near a grave in the night, and even their witch-doctors will not do this. So I decided to try the following experiment. I explained to the few more reasonable ones that the accusation of the people was false and unjust, and that I was so convinced that there was no spirit about that I would, if they liked, walk over to the grave, in order to show them that I had implicit faith in my assertion. The few near me seemed to think that this was reasonable, and, not wishing to give them time to reconsider, I began at once to put my offer into execution. I knew that, if I could once get in the vicinity of the grave, I could remain undisturbed for the rest of that night, and probably by the morning their excitement and hostility might have died down. I had not gone far, however, before they brought me back. A strong discussion seemed to follow. Some were evidently taking my part, but I overheard one old man observe that it was quite easy for me to offer to walk in that direction, as I had just had an interview with the ghost, and therefore could not possibly be afraid to meet it again, adding some other remarks about my powers as a wizard.

Finding nothing further could be done, I tried to appear quite indifferent, and retired again under my net. Doubtless they thought that I had gone to sleep, and perhaps remarked on my coolness and bravery. But in reality I remained quite as wide awake as any of them for the remainder of that night.

I heard afterwards that the cause of all the uproar was an old woman's dream, in which she saw the ghost. As the people had been in an exceptionally excited and anxious state of mind that night, owing to the fact that they had adopted

this innovation of remaining in a place after a death, their excitement was easily fanned to a flame when this old woman, suddenly awaking, recounted her dream. Nevertheless, my predicament was awkward and unpleasant enough, and I do not suppose I shall ever know exactly in what imminent danger I was at the time.

This incident shows that the Indian strongly resents, and is prepared to punish with the greatest possible severity, any attempt to have dealings with the ghosts of the departed. In my case, I had been a party to the burial, and had therefore been supposed, together with the others, to have done all that I could by rites and ceremonies to prevent the spirit from having any occasion to revenge itself upon its people, and the accusation of the Indians was that, in opposition to the whole object of the funeral rites, I had called up the ghost. The fact also that I had urged them to remain in the same village and abstain from some of their customs made any breach of honour on my part the more culpable, as it placed me under the suspicion of having laid special traps to bring about their ruin.

In the case before mentioned the man had distinctly said that he had seen the woman after her burial. Now this could not possibly have meant that he had seen the ghost, because all Indians are supposed to see the ghosts of the dead, and their funeral rites aim mainly at exorcising such apparitions. His statement meant, so I gathered from the Indians, either that the woman had not been actually buried, or that the rites had not been adequately performed, with the result that her apparition had been hovering about. Now as he happened to be one of the funeral party, he was responsible with the others for any evil that might ensue, and because, in order evidently to annoy the others, he had boasted that things had not been done satisfactorily, he was put to death.

To return now to my account of the burial rite, an interesting ceremonial is that of the purification of the funeral party on their return to the village. Several clay pots containing water stand on the fires. After drinking some of the hot water, they wash themselves all over. *Palo santo* wood is then burnt

and carried round the village. A hole is dug to receive the ashes of the village fires, which are carefully collected and buried, for reasons already given in a previous chapter. The property of the deceased is then burnt, and if he possessed animals they are generally killed before the main party vacate the village—that is, prior to the actual burial. The final act is the destruction of their booths, which they burn to the ground, and the funeral party proceed with all haste to join the rest, frequently looking behind them in nervous fear in the darkness of night, and failing to make such rapid progress as they would wish, owing to the thorns and other obstacles in their path.

Next day the near relatives go into mourning, although, if time allows, they do this on the day of the death. This consists in painting the face black, generally with charcoal, streaks being made to represent tear courses. The hair is cropped short, and a covering is placed over the head. The wailing for the dead is carried on during the first night. The near relatives, as they enter the new village, are closely muffled up, and they live apart for the space of a month, taking their food alone, and never sharing in the common pot. They are looked upon as unclean until the expiration of the days of mourning, when they undergo a purification with hot water, and it is not till then that the funeral feast begins. The bereaved stand outside their hut and wail, a fire is made, and they are joined by their friends, who stand round and sing. All then circle round the fire, singing as they go. Boys are dressed up to represent dragon-flies, and by their antics and their inimitable representation of these insects cause much merriment. The purification is then complete, the mourning is over, and the bereaved are allowed to enter once more into the common village life.

In the case of death from snake-bite, only the ordinary rites are observed. In cases of infanticide, the child is simply buried, there are no rites connected with it, and no mourning attached to it beyond the death-wail from the mother.

A murderer, when executed, is not mourned for, the ashes of the funeral pyre are scattered to the four winds, and the instruments used at his execution are first shown to the relatives of

the murdered man, still stained with blood, in order to prove that vengeance has been fully carried out. They are then buried, as they can never be used again for any purpose.

The name of a dead person is never mentioned, and should it be necessary to refer to him, he is only spoken of as "he who was." The great object is to forget their lost relatives as soon as possible.

The Indian is loath to bury if there is any possibility of the patient surviving the night, and should death occur too late to bury that night, as sometimes, though seldom, does happen, owing to an error of judgment on the part of the wizard, their peculiar rites, if considered necessary, are at once performed and the body carried out and placed at a considerable distance from the village. In such a case the funeral takes place the next day.

A typical instance will illustrate this. An old woman unexpectedly showed signs of final collapse about nine o'clock one night. In her particular case, the stone rite was considered imperative. She was carried by her people to a spot some distance from the village, where the rite was performed, and there left for the night. In the morning she was found several yards from where they had laid her, the ground being torn up all around her, and her finger-tips much lacerated. It is quite evident that she could not have been dead when the mutilation rites were carried out, and she must have spent the greater part of the night in dreadful agony of body and mind. The reader can realize for himself the terrible experience this woman must have undergone, left thus alone in the darkness of night, to die a lingering death, tortured with pain and harassed by supernatural fears.

CHAPTER XVII

RESCUE OF A CHILD

A PERSONAL experience of my own which occurred while I was alone in the Chaco, only a few months before my perilous adventure at Thlagwakhe, will convey to the reader some idea of one of the most horrible and revolting of Indian customs.

The scene of this occurrence was about two miles west of Thlagwakhe. A severe epidemic of influenza had visited the whole village, and one woman in particular had been in a very weak state for some time. Her condition ultimately became critical. During the previous week I had arranged to remove the village to Thlagwakhe, which was a much better situation, and a number of young men were employed in building huts there.

About midday there were such clear signs that the woman's end could not be far off that the people packed up their belongings, and, driving off their animals, migrated to the new site. Leaving about eight men behind, I went over with the main party to superintend the removal of my own property, but left word that I was to be notified as soon as the death took place.

About five o'clock a messenger arrived with the news, and I hastened back with him. I found the woman lying outside the village covered with reed matting, and preparations were being vigorously made for her burial. The water-pots for purification purposes were already on the fire. Knowing their customs, I insisted upon examining the woman, and, in spite of the protests of the Indians, I removed the matting. Her pleading eyes met my gaze, and in a faint voice she implored me to give

her a drink of water. This I procured for her, greatly to the annoyance of the rest.

Presently two men drew near, bringing a pole with them, and announcing that the grave was ready. It was now about six o'clock, and the sun was fast setting. There then ensued a heated altercation between myself and the men, I protesting against her burial, since she was still alive, and they eager to hasten it, her own husband being one of the party. Eventually they agreed to wait until the last possible moment, which was not long in coming. I examined her again. She appeared to be quite unconscious, but was still breathing. Life, however, could not last much longer. In spite of my further pleading, they carried her off, burying her without mutilation, and only placing fire in the grave.

I did not wait at the grave-side more than a few minutes, but hurried back to the village in order to soothe her three-months-old child, which had been left in a hammock. I had never even heard of their horrible custom of burying an infant thus left, with its mother, and I quite concluded that the father intended taking it with him when the rites were completed. What was my horror, therefore, when the father and another man appeared and prepared to carry the child off!

"You surely will not kill the infant?" I said.

"Oh no," he replied; "the mother would be angry; our custom is to place it in the grave with the mother."

"What! alive?" I asked.

"Yes, such is our way," he replied, and he appeared very angry at the mere suggestion on my part of any further interference with their customs.

However, I made a bold stand against such a proceeding.

Presently the other men arrived to inquire the reason of the delay, on learning which their anger knew no bounds, especially when I persisted in my opposition. Matters were becoming very serious, for they assumed a threatening attitude. I could not, despite the risk involved, stand by and be a party to such a brutal deed. In turn, I threatened them with the wrath of Higher Powers, of which, however, they knew little at that time.

I vowed that I would leave their country, and would refuse any longer to associate with men capable of perpetrating such a cruel murder. They retorted as hotly that I was a stranger, and had no right to interfere with them. The young Chief, however, and two young men, to my great surprise, took my part, and told the others that it was well known that I had powers unknown to their people, and that probably in my case I could rear the child, and ward off the wrath of the mother. It was a struggle for righteousness and humanity, in which I might feel sure of Divine support.

The argument had been so long, and their excitement so intense, that the flight of time had been unnoticed, and darkness had almost settled down upon us. Greatly to my relief and joy, they allowed me to take the child, and fearing the possibility of a change of mind on their part, I left them to finish the funeral rites themselves, and hastened off with the child in my arms, feeling sure that on my arrival at the village, I should without any difficulty find some suitable woman to nurse the child for me. To my disgust and surprise, however, I was met with fierce abuse from men and women alike. I appealed to the child's sister, a girl of about eighteen, feeling sure that her natural affection would induce her to give me all the help she could, but she was, if anything, more abusive to me than the rest. As the child must have had practically no nourishment that day, I placed it in my hut, but when I called to some of the people to assist me in catching a goat in order that I might get some milk, they flatly refused, and even forbade me to get milk myself.

The people were profoundly stirred with excitement and rage, and the arrival at this juncture of the burial party unfortunately made matters worse. I did the best I could under the circumstances, and, after preparing some rice-water, managed to give the child a little nourishment with a spoon. Shortly after this I was informed that I should not be allowed to remain that night in the village. The ghost of the mother, they said, would shortly arrive looking for her child, and as I had been mad enough to run such risks I must face them alone. I was com-

pelled, therefore, to camp away from the village, and to take the baby with me.

As there was nothing else for it, I pulled some long grass, and, fixing up my mosquito-net, improvised as comfortable a bed as I could. Having washed the child, and wrapped it in a piece of one of my spare shirts, I placed it under the net, and then, after making a fire, sat down to think out my plans for the immediate future. My own stock of provisions was exceedingly limited, and quite unsuitable to feed an infant on. It occurred to me that I might keep it alive with rice-water and a thin gruel made of flour, together with an egg, if I could procure one; possibly also, by watching my opportunity, I might be able to capture a goat and use its milk for the child, and thus keep it alive until I could reach the River Paraguay, about one hundred miles off.

It was imperative that I should proceed thither at once, starting on the morrow if possible. I had also to contrive some better method of administering this food, and I thought of all sorts of devices. Preparing some more rice-water for use in the night and following morning, I then joined the little one under my net, and spent a fairly comfortable night, in spite of the disturbance prevailing in the village near by.

On the morrow I declared my intention of leaving immediately for the river, and called for guides to accompany me.

At that time it was extremely hazardous to make such a long journey alone, the nature of the country being such that unless one was thoroughly acquainted with the tracks, it was the easiest matter to lose oneself, and with my infant charge I could not afford to lose a day by straying from the track.

To my surprise and disappointment, they one and all positively refused to move. I had concluded that they would have been only too glad to get rid of me, and I was filled with misgiving at the attitude which they adopted. Should they imagine that they saw the ghost of the woman, it might lead to very serious consequences to myself, and they would almost certainly kill the child in order to propitiate the mother.

As things turned out, I was delayed ten days, and during this time I went through a terrible period of anxiety and constant

dread. My greatest difficulty was in providing for the child, and such straits was I in that I even resorted to theft. I watched my opportunity, and stole every egg I could find. On several occasions I was fortunate enough to waylay a goat as it wandered some little distance from the village, and thus secured a cupful of milk. I tried to improvise a feeding-bottle, but it was not a success; so I hit upon the expedient of feeding it by gently squirting the fluid from my mouth into the mouth of the child. But my chief standby was a piece of rag, soaked in milk and egg, and then placed in its mouth, and I resorted to the former method only when I thought it was not taking sufficient nourishment. I afterwards learnt that, far from underfeeding it, I had erred on the side of overfeeding.

Eventually five men, including the father, consented to accompany me. One would have been quite sufficient, but they were evidently convinced that safety lay in numbers. It was late in the day before we set out. Fortunately we were all mounted on horseback, but at sunset they insisted on camping for the night. As we had covered such a short distance, I thought the proposal unreasonable, and again feared trickery. The next day, however, we advanced, resting frequently in order to feed the horses. That night I insisted upon continuing our journey, and to my relief they agreed. Our route lay a great deal through forest country, and my companions evidently passed a more anxious night than I did. They were in terror of the ghost. Sometimes they would stop, hearing noises, and make me lead the way. Of a sudden they would insist upon my bringing up the rear, as the danger seemed to lie in that direction.

We reached the river just at dawn. I was tired from the long ride and from having to carry the child—which I did in a prepared sheepskin bag—but I was greatly relieved at being at last secure and within reach of proper treatment for my young charge. Suitable food was at once obtained. As no evil influences followed my action, the demeanour of the natives rapidly changed, and they soon, especially the father, began to take an interest in the child. Shortly after, I placed it in the care of the wife of a missionary resident in Concepcion, and

returned again into the interior. The child's sister soon became interested, and actually pleaded with me to bring the child back and place it in her charge.

Unfortunately, the little one died about six months afterwards, and as I considered it the special property of the Mission, and had determined to bring it up as a Christian, the lady's husband baptized it just before death by the name of Hope, and she was buried in the Chaco, on the banks of the Paraguay.

I greatly regretted the death of this little child. Had she lived, it might have been possible to save many others from the fate which she so narrowly escaped. As it was, the Indians concluded that, as we had failed to rear her, any similar attempt would be equally futile, and only became more convinced that theirs was the best and only method of disposing of such motherless children.

ARROWS—BLUNT HEAD, IRON HEAD, AND BARBED-WOOD HEAD.

CHAPTER XVIII

FEASTS

One interesting feature of Chaco Indian life is the holding of periodic feasts. In this they are no exception to the rest of mankind. Their life on the whole is dull in the extreme, and these gatherings are looked forward to by them as among the great events of their lives, in bringing the people together and widening their friendships. Although feasts are connected in great measure with their religion, such as it is, they also partake very largely of the social element. They are invariably held on special occasions, with the exception of the impromptu feasts organized as a welcome to unexpected visitors.

The Indian feasts are seven in number, and may be summarized as follows:

The *Yanmana*, connected with the coming of age of a girl; and the *Wainkya*, to commemorate the coming of age of a boy.

The *Kyaiya*, held to welcome the spring, the summer solstice, and the autumn equinox.

A feast held preparatory to war—one on the occasion of a marriage, another to welcome visitors, and the funeral feast.

The principal feature of the *Yanmana* is that the girl sits in a specially constructed booth with one or two girl companions. She is gaily ornamented, and for the first time adopts the longer skirt of the woman. She ceases at this feast to be a child. The women dance by themselves, each holding a long cane with a bunch of deer's hoofs tied at the top. These they strike on the ground, producing a loud jangling sound, marking time to a chant. Forming themselves into a ring, they keep a regular step as they circle round. An old woman in the centre rattles

her cane, and keeps the same step as the others, chanting with them, but in a louder tone. She goes through many strange contortions of the body, at times pretending to tear out her own hair. The men also form into circles, each holding a gourd filled with seeds and small shells, which they rattle with a uniform swinging motion, keeping time to a chant. The boys, dressed in ostrich plumes, wear masks to represent evil spirits, and, running one behind the other, they move in and out among the crowd jingling bunches of hoofs, and from time to time uttering prolonged shrill cries. When they circle round near the girl, the women drive them off.

The *Wainkya* takes its name from the drums which are beaten day and night without intermission by relays of men. These drums are made by stretching wet deer-hide over clay pots containing a varying amount of water in order to produce different sounds. Wrestling is one of the features of this feast. Both the *Yanmana* and the *Wainkya* frequently last six or seven weeks. If they take place during the summer months intoxicants are largely used. Vice is prevalent at both such gatherings, which makes it impossible to give any adequate description of them.

The *Kyaiya* is a feast at which the men alone dance, and various games are indulged in. I believe it had originally to do with the seasons, as a man in the centre of the circle of dancers keeps pointing to the four cardinal points. If held in the spring, the rejoicing is in anticipation of the new food-supplies; if in the summer, it takes the form of a thanksgiving for the *algaroba*, bean harvest; and if in the autumn, it celebrates the gathering in of the main garden crops.

The marriage feast is similar to the *Kyaiya*, with this exception, that the principal feature of it is the pretended stealing of the bride by the bridegroom. At a given time he runs off with his bride, and, after going a little way from the village, they hide. He is pursued by a company of young men, who, however, fail to capture him. On their return, being supposed to be exhausted by their pursuit, they are surrounded by the women, who pour water upon them to cool them.

FEASTS

The funeral feast takes place after a month's mourning, and is held with the object of cheering up the bereaved. It would appear by the words of encouragement which are spoken to the mourners that the ghost of the departed, which is supposed to have been hovering round for the previous month, will now leave the district for good.

The war feast has as its principal feature certain trials of strength and skill, the object being to rouse the feelings of the people, and work them up to courageous deeds.

On the arrival of guests, or after a successful hunt, or on any other occasion of rejoicing, a feast is held. These last five feasts mentioned vary in duration from a day to a week, seldom longer, the average being about three days. Their duration naturally depends largely on the supply of food. During the day detachments of women collect roots, vegetables, and fruits, while parties of men are engaged in hunting and fishing in order to supply the larder.

Except in the case of the first two, feasts are held only during the night, beginning at sunset and ending promptly at sunrise, and in all cases the night is the most festal time. In the absence of a moon, light is obtained by large fires and palm-leaf torches. All are gaily painted and covered with ornaments, their head-dresses of feathers being especially striking. Apart from the evils attending these feasts, they have a peculiar savage charm.

It is quite clear that before our arrival in the country a change had come over the people, which has already been referred to. This change must also have affected their feasts and the customs connected with them. For example, the marriage feast has become, as far as we know, extinct among the Lenguas. I myself have only witnessed one, and there are numbers of young men of twenty-five years and under who have never seen or even heard of one in their time. The funeral feast, too, seems to have practically died out; and, from all I have heard, there appears to have been a considerable modification in all the other feasts. These changes have not been brought about through outside influence, but I can form no idea of the causes that have led to them.

It is worthy of note that night is always selected for these celebrations. One cause, of course, is reasonable, and that is the excessive heat of the days, although this does not entirely explain the matter. There is no doubt that a large amount of licentiousness prevails, and night forms a fitting cover; but as their witchcraft is also practised chiefly after sunset, night is selected because of the religious character of their feasts. The Indian, furthermore, has a keen eye to artistic fitness; his dress always harmonizes with his surroundings, and undoubtedly the artistic setting of a feast is much enhanced by the dark shades of night, the bright glow of the camp-fires, and the light of the moon. Certainly the weird spectacle of an Indian feast would lose half its charm from a picturesque point of view were it held by day. Perhaps the best way in which I can convey to the reader a clear idea of what an Indian feast is really like will be to describe one of scores in which I have taken part. For this purpose I shall select a *Kyaiya* which was held one Chaco midsummer—December, 1892—at the village of Kilmesakthla-pomaap, distant about one hundred miles by road from the River Paraguay, and from the nearest point of civilization.

The village was situated on a clear open space, beneath the shade of large *algaroba* trees. The encampment faced the north, and to the south was the broad swampy stream, with little woods and tall waving palm-trees all around. I was staying at the village as the guest of the witch-doctor, Waitkyaingwahik ("Cow-nose"). This implied that I had a deer-skin to lie upon in his booth, a piece of palm-log for a pillow, and my own blanket and mosquito-net. My host supplied me with such food as he had, but I eked out this fare with frequent kettles of tea and with flour mixed with water and fried in fat for bread. This was all I had in addition to Indian food, which was plentiful enough, but I confined myself chiefly to sweet potatoes and pumpkins roasted on the embers, with an occasional piece of sheep or deer flesh spitted on a stick over the fire.

I passed the first few days of my stay in visiting the gardens, bathing with the lads in an open pool in the swamp-stream, and studying their language and habits. At night we generally

THE "SOWALACH"

A dance of the "Yanmana" feast, performed by a troop of lads, who issue from the forest, feathered and masked, a square string bag being so arranged that one of the corners projects from the nose. On their near approach—moving in a serpentine formation—the women protect the girl in whose honour the feast is held by dancing round her, chanting loudly, and often by douching the lads with gourds of water.

WRESTLING CONTESTS

Throwing is chiefly done by a clever manipulation of the legs and feet. The men often adopt a peculiar form—some twenty-five form a line, each gripping the belt of the one in front. Twenty-five others, standing separately, challenge, and attempt to break the line.

sat round the fire, smoking and talking till the early morning hours, hearing adventures and folklore, or discussing incidents of the chase.

One night the question was brought up of the advisability of holding a *Kyaiya*. The *algaroba* bean was plentiful in the neighbourhood, and the swamp-stream was well stocked with fish. Palm-cabbages could be easily procured in large quantities, and deer had been reported in the vicinity. Circumstances were therefore favourable for holding such a feast, the abundance of provisions being sufficient to entertain a large number of guests. That night there was great excitement in the village. The young lads immediately began practising for the dance on the open space in front, and the girls made the night merry with their laughter. The men and a few of the older women sat in groups, engaged in the more serious and important business of discussing the details. Every now and then one of them, in a loud peculiar tone, would make some joking remark to another at the far end of the encampment, and this joke would be bandied round for a few minutes, and then the business in hand would proceed.

I joined myself to the business committee. It was arranged that some of the women should begin on the morrow to collect the *algaroba* bean for the purpose of brewing a native beer and also for pounding into flour, while the others should collect large quantities of the palm-cabbage, the tender shoots to be eaten uncooked, the harder parts to be boiled or roasted, and some dried, grated, and made into flour for cakes. The older men were to go off fishing—not that the fish would keep in such a climate, but in order to boil them down for the fat, which they consider such a luxury, and also to dry, grind up, and make into fish-flour. The younger men were to scour the country for game.

Presently one of the committee turned to me and said: "What will you hunt, Yiphenabanyetik?" I replied that I should be most willing to bear my part, and as the choice had been given me, I would go out and kill the sheep. This was taken as a huge joke, and was at once circulated round the

encampment. Various jokes were made in return at my expense. One old fellow croaked out: "Take care, Yiphenabanyetik; the sheep are very savage. You had better climb a tree before you shoot." Another recommended me to see that my saddle-girths were tight and my spurs sharp, so that I might, when pressed, escape by flight. A third warned me that sheep could bite. I retorted that anyway there would be more fat on the game that I brought in than on the deer that they were likely to get, and that, furthermore, I was sure of killing something, while it was a question whether they would. This frivolity wasted quite a quarter of an hour of the committee's valuable time.

Two men, my host being one, were deputed to cut down and prepare two large bottle-trunk trees, to serve, when hollowed out, as vats for brewing purposes. Five young men were told off to carry invitations to the villages around. It was after midnight before we retired to rest, but early next morning, as "the red was breaking in the sky," the hunters set off, the fishers and the women following shortly afterwards. Towards evening the various parties began to return, staggering under their burdens.

Next day, and the next, the same process was repeated, until a large supply of food had been collected. About noon on the third day the first guests arrived. There was great excitement, and at every succeeding arrival the women and girls would run out to meet them, relieve them of their arms, and, laughing and giggling, accompany them towards the camp, where the chief and head men formally met and received them. During the late hours of the afternoon all were busy decorating and painting themselves.

I received special attention from some of the more gifted artists. My sunburnt skin on the exposed parts of my body was not unlike the tint of the Indian, and when I had adopted a blanket, feathers, anklets, and an Indian shirt, all that was wanting was the painting of my face, neck, and arms, and the decoration of my head. Two women took me in hand, and with sticks of red paint made from the seeds of the *urucu* plant, they drew the most wonderful markings upon me. My head-dress was more troublesome to adjust, owing to my short hair, but

WOMEN DANCERS AT A "YANMANA"

They are protecting the girl in whose honour the feast is held. Two boys with masked faces are seen on the outside of the ring of dancers, who chant loudly and dance more vigorously at their near approach. Wrestling is a prominent feature of the feast. Boys, clad only in belts of raw cowhide, are standing ready to engage in wrestling bouts.

eventually they turned me out evidently to their full satisfaction, and, bringing me a piece of a broken looking-glass, bade me examine and admire myself. I was soon the centre of an admiring crowd, and it must be confessed that the transformation in my appearance was such that wherever I had happened to appear, I should assuredly have attracted a crowd.

Just as the sun set they began to rattle the gourds, beating time to a low minor chant, and thus the *Kyaiya* commenced. Fifteen men composed the circle of singers, keeping step with their feet, and gracefully swaying their bodies to the rattle of their gourds and the chant. There are various chants connected with the *Kyiaya*, but all without words, with one rare exception, although the Indians assert that in ancient times all their chants were connected with various subjects, expressed in words, which, however, have been lost for some generations, the tunes alone surviving.

About an hour after sunset the chief meal of the day was ready. Skins were placed upon the ground in the open space in front of the booths, and on them the food was spread. The circle of singers had in the meantime been enlarged to about thirty men, and the witch-doctor, with an assistant, stood in the centre. With gourds in their left hands, and a bunch of ostrich plumes held in the right, these two (keeping step the whole time to the chant) performed a dance which resembled, if anything, two cocks fighting.

When this dance was concluded, at a signal from the witch-doctor the circle formed into two lines, resembling a "V," with the wizard at the apex. In this form they circled round the food-mats, keeping perfect step and time to their own chant, the formation never being broken. The witch-doctor next jumped over the food, followed by the two lines of dancers. They then circled round a second time, and the jumping was repeated, but this time from an opposite direction, as apparently their custom is to jump first from east to west, and then from north to south. They concluded with a flourish of the gourds, this being the signal for the meal to commence. Ten of the dancers, however, immediately formed a ring and resumed the

chanting, for one of the essentials of a feast is that the song must not cease till the sun rises. In order that this might be maintained the chanters relieved each other in relays. When the food had been apportioned out by the leading man, mirth and conversation became general.

After the meal the elder men sat in a circle on the ground, and beer was handed to them in gourds by the women. They all drank with great solemnity, copious draughts following one another in quick succession ; but when the beer took effect they began to talk volubly, and kept leaning over towards each other, making violent gesticulations, as if they were engaged in a serious altercation. In reality each man was telling his own story, without paying the least attention to his neighbour. One was recounting a tiger adventure to his *vis-à-vis*, who, instead of listening, was intent on telling his experiences of the Kisapang War ; his neighbour appeared to be contradicting him flatly, but in reality he was excitedly narrating how he exchanged some sheep for a horse.

It may be well to remind the reader that only the men drink, the women and youths not being allowed intoxicants.

As serious quarrels are liable to arise at such festive times, a small number of men were told off each day and night to remain perfectly sober, in order to act as police in case of necessity ; and when trouble arose the women at once secreted all dangerous weapons. It is seldom, however, that an Indian becomes hopelessly intoxicated, as all are supposed to take part in the dancing, and it is considered very bad behaviour to be incapable of this. In their turn, therefore, the drinkers took their places in the dance circle. The result was ludicrous to a degree. They were somewhat unsteady and drowsy with beer, and each one, struggling bravely to avoid the disgrace of falling asleep, kept a very mechanical and faulty step to a chant which was sadly out of tune. This gave rise to peals of laughter from the onlookers, and the comical figure of a Chief with only one eye, which he found most difficult to keep open, was made a butt for the taunts and jeers of the rest.

During the night, refreshments consisting of food, water, and

pipes of tobacco, were periodically served to the dancers by the women. The food was cut into small pieces, and held in a corner of their skin skirts. Walking round the circle, each stopped behind the man she chose, and, taking a piece of food, placed it in his mouth. Another gave him a drink of water, and another held a pipe to his mouth, and so each was served without the dance being interrupted. Frequently I saw tricks played by the girls upon young men against whom they had a grudge. When one man opened his mouth for a savoury morsel, he received a lump of clay instead, which he spat out, but took no further notice of it, while the onlookers burst into fits of laughter. The water-jar was sometimes tipped up suddenly, with the result that the water was spilt down the drinker's chest, and somewhat spoiled his ornamentation. But these tricks were borne good-naturedly by all.

Some of the young men engaged in wrestling contests and other dances, in addition to the *Kyaiya*, which, however, was kept steadily going. One of these was called the *Maning*, or circle. The dancers formed a circle, with their arms interlaced round each other's waists, and the girls joined in, holding on behind to the waist-belt of each man. The step, though quicker than that of the *Kyaiya*, is very regular and graceful. The chant accompanying it at first begins slowly, then gradually becomes faster and faster, till the dancers are out of breath. The Lengua chant sung at the *Maning* dance is composed of a series of words which apparently have no meaning, with the exception of one, *hiuerkla*, which is the Suhin word for "moon":

"Hé-e-ní,
Hé-a-háni-yá,
Hé-a-háni-yá,
Hé-a-í-ní
Hé-a-háni-ya,
Hé-a-háni-hiuerkla,
Hé-a-háni-hé-i-a
Hé-a-háni-hé-i-a."

Repeat "Hé-e-ní, Hé-a-háni-yá" *ad lib.*

The chant has its musical intervals, but they are too vague and irregular to be reproduced in notation.

Another dance in which they indulged at this *Kyaiya* was very similar to one that I had seen among the Yaghan Indians of Tierra del Fuego—the *Kawasheut*. Two lines of dancers faced each other, with their arms resting on each other's shoulders, and, keeping step to their chant, they advanced and, then reversing the step, retreated. At first the step was slow, but gradually quickened, until the dancers ceased from exhaustion.

At one juncture of this feast the harmony was somewhat spoilt by a woman becoming sick and requiring the assistance of the witch-doctor; but the proceedings were not allowed to be interrupted, the wizard and a few companions alone attending on the sick woman. The effect of this solemn sick dirge mingling at the dead of night with the more lively chant of the dance and other sounds of merriment, coupled with the whole weird setting of the scene, illuminated as it was by the light of many fires, which were being constantly replenished, caused an impression not easily forgotten.

As soon as the sun rose the gourds were held aloft and rattled vigorously to signify that the festivities were at an end until the following evening. Everyone was tired, sleepy, and husky, and most of the party lost no time in selecting shady spots where they might sleep. The scene then was almost as strange as that of the past night. Under every suitable tree in the vicinity lay prostrate forms, with their blankets wrapped over their heads in spite of the heat. If a traveller had come suddenly upon the encampment he might have thought that some disaster had befallen it, and that the covered bodies were those of the dead.

It was not till the afternoon that any appearance of life showed itself. Then the people began to bestir themselves, and painting and decorating recommenced. Parties went off to the forest to get firewood; women were to be seen in long lines carrying jars of water from the neighbouring swamp, and a few old men went off fishing.

As the sun was setting the dancers took up their positions, and with rattle and chant the feast was resumed, and continued

for six days and nights. As soon as it was over, Chaco etiquette demanded that the visitors should at once leave. Tired out as they were, they only travelled a short distance, and then, selecting a shady spot, they lay down and slept until sufficiently refreshed to continue their journey.

During my first few years amongst these people I mixed freely in their feasts, as by this means I was enabled to study them to greater advantage; it also pleased the people, and won me a place in their affections. I found it very tiresome, however, after the first novelty wore off; even if I had wanted to sleep at night, the din would have made it impossible, and I should have lost weight with them had I given way to this weakness.

We even encouraged feasts for a time with a view of drawing the people together, and we ourselves contributed to the food-supply. Even after we were in a position to begin mission-work amongst them we found it necessary to continue our sanction to this their chief form of amusement, for they would not have remained with us had we prohibited feasts altogether; but we enforced certain restrictions. At an early stage we refused to allow native beer, we limited their duration, and insisted upon moral conduct as far as possible. Since Indian etiquette required that all visitors should leave the moment the feast was over, we stipulated that visitors must arrive a considerable time before the proposed feast was to be held. This enabled us to mix freely with them and exert some little influence over them for good, which was quite impossible during the excitement of the festivities.

Among the more trained and Christian natives a higher view of life now prevails, and we have noticed a growing and spontaneous disinclination for their old diversions, and a stronger desire for more refined and intellectual amusements.

CHAPTER XIX

INDIAN SOCIALISM

From the little I have been able to gather of their history, I have every reason to believe that the Chaco Indians were at one time a vastly superior race—better off in many respects than they are now, and that their degeneration is due to their social system, for in their free native state they are thoroughly socialistic. Before going into the question fully, it may be profitable to summarize the features of this system as it exists amongst them.

The land belongs to the people generally, and no Indian, not even a Chief, has any direct claim to any part of it over his fellows. No Indian is encouraged to have more possessions than his neighbour. Their flocks feed on the common pasture, and they only lay claim to their gardens while actually cultivating them.

The natural products of the country, such as game, honey, wild fruits, fish, and firewood, are the common property of all, and native law enjoins the widest hospitality.

Every man is supposed to hunt; there is no such thing as a leisured class, not even among Chiefs.

There are really no social distinctions, the Chiefs only holding rule when it is for the common good, such as in time of war.

There is no law of inheritance. The clan is to a great extent as responsible for the children as the parents themselves; and the education and maintenance of children are tribal matters rather than parental. Children are supposed to have as much liberty as possible.

As far as native law goes, there is very little restriction in marriage.

The aged must be kept at the expense of the community, as also the sick or disabled.

Competition in the way of one man striving to rise superior to his fellow-men, to rule over others, or to better himself at their expense, is strongly discouraged, and almost non-existent.

Those who have been travelling, and therefore not able to produce crops, or those who for any other reason have no means of subsistence for the time being, have a claim on the community.

Passing from this summary to fuller details, I will endeavour to show how at least four centuries of their peculiar social system have affected the Chaco Indians. There is among them as much diversity of ability, strength, and energy as amongst other people, but the able agriculturist who could, if he would, acquire a large and productive plantation by his own efforts, who by thrift and industry could maintain his own family and dependents comfortably, refuses, in obedience to the socialistic law, to work for the support of others of whom he does not approve. Accordingly he produces no more than is absolutely necessary for present needs. He never saves anything against the day of adversity, because others are not doing the same, and therefore, if he had a store in reserve, the thriftless would step in and share it with him. The clever hunter can bring in abundance of game, but he sees no use in unduly fatiguing himself, and is content with supplying his own immediate needs and the wants of those whom he desires to help. The natural result is that the Indian, in course of generations, has become thriftless, lazy, and selfish, and has lost, to a great extent, all kind feelings for those outside his own immediate circle.

Some examples of Indian life will serve to illustrate these statements. I once urged a strong and capable Indian to use the land which he had under cultivation to better advantage. He agreed that the soil was good, and that with comparatively little more effort he could treble the amount of produce. He also admitted that he understood well how to preserve his maize

and other products, and thereby secure himself against hunger, and even against the short rations which cause the Indian much suffering for a considerable part of the year. But he argued that it would not benefit him if he were to do so. He mentioned several of his clansmen, and bade me look at their tiny gardens, saying: "If I grew large crops, these men would grow still less, and, according to our custom, they would become my uninvited guests, and the surplus over and above what I now have would go to them instead of to my family. Were I to garner my crops and keep them for a time of scarcity, these men would not exercise equal thrift, and knowing that I had a stock they would call upon me."

On another occasion, when I was out hunting with Indians, we found an ostrich's nest containing many eggs, all of which they immediately took. I remonstrated, and said: "Why not leave some, so that the stock of ostriches may be maintained?" They only laughed, and said, "The wolf, if he finds it, will consume what we leave, or if an Indian comes along he will take them." So they sat down and proceeded to gorge themselves, eating an altogether unnecessary amount, and only took away a few for their families. This struck me as an example of the most unmitigated greed and selfishness, but on arriving that night at their village, the hunters were speedily surrounded by a number of people whom I knew to be exceptionally lazy, and who had not that day made any effort to obtain food. They at once inquired of the hunters what they had found, and the reply was, "Ostrich eggs." With sparkling eyes they asked, "How many?" "Only a few," was the reply; "we have been able to carry barely sufficient for a meal for our own families." This was, to a great extent, untrue, and I told them so. Their reply was that some of their people would never seek for food if they could possibly get it from others, and that they could not appreciate the virtue of denying themselves and carrying a heavy burden through the heat in order to save these men, who were as capable as themselves, from exertion on their own behalf.

The Indians build miserable dwellings, small, cramped, and

affording very insufficient shelter, and yet when employed by us to build a hut on native lines for ourselves, they can speedily make a very satisfactory one. When I rebuked them for not making better shelters for themselves, they replied: "If we built a large and roomy hut, others would claim our hospitality in bad weather. Why, therefore, should we exert ourselves to save others the trouble?"

A native will frequently keep a secret hoard of food or honey, and even allow it to waste, simply because he objects to sharing it with others whom he does not like.

This Socialism has dwarfed and stunted every characteristic of the people. A man who insisted upon keeping for himself and his family the possessions which he had gained by his own efforts would be hated and terrorized by the others. A man will not even keep two blankets, the second for a change, because a man without sheep, or wedded to a lazy wife who will not weave, will pester him to lend his spare blanket, and this would generally end in the borrower keeping it. He therefore prefers to sell it, as soon as an opportunity occurs, for something with which he can gratify a temporary pleasure.

The Indian is generally very fond of his children, and supplies their needs lavishly. He is kind to his immediate relatives and friends; and the casual visitor, watching the people sharing their food, apparently with great generosity, might think that they were exceptionally liberal and kind-hearted. But this apparent hospitality is given grudgingly, though ostensibly with a good grace. They are compelled to share by native law. This system leads not only to poverty and thriftlessness, but even to crime. The old are often neglected, not so much from intention as on account of the extreme poverty into which the people have fallen, and of the selfishness of many who insist upon sharing the food instead of exerting themselves to increase the supply.

Socialism with the Indian is not a matter of choice, but has been forced upon him by his circumstances. The nature of the country, owing to the want of appliances to improve it, is such that he is forced to lead a nomadic life, and therefore there has been, up to the present, no necessity to claim rights in land.

Again, the history of the people proves that they have drifted into this inhospitable plain through forces over which they had no control, the chief being the pressure of stronger nations behind them. Pressed from behind, and met by opposition from those already occupying the lower lands, they were compelled to fight for their very existence. Every man counted in war, even if lazy and thriftless in peace. It was impossible to live apart from the clan life of little communities. Life would be unbearable in such a land without society and companionship. It would be impossible for the Indian to live the life of the lonely settler in the Colonies, for he is essentially a sociable being, and delights in the company of his fellows. Friction and unpleasantness in a small community would be unbearable, and having begun the common life in the early times of danger, when it was necessary for all to share, they found it difficult afterwards to make changes which might have led to disintegration.

We found it absolutely necessary, if we were ever going to raise the people above the low level in which we found them, to oppose this social system, and, knowing the innate conservatism of the Indians, we were surprised to find how readily they welcomed the alteration. In fact, before we reached the country, the people, having become settled in the land, and to a great extent freed from the dangers of war, had already begun to break up into smaller parties than formerly. New clans had been formed, chiefly composed of immediate relatives, and had already acquired property. We also found that they had, to a slight extent, begun to make things uncomfortable for loafers and non-producers, and that in marriage they strongly opposed any alliance between their women and men who were known to be indolent.

Since man will not gather, if what he gathers is to be taken from him, we set to work to urge upon them the need of securing the rights of those who honestly acquired property. We met with instant and cordial support, and in these few years a great change has come over the people. The communal system is rapidly dying out, and as rapidly are the people rising in the social scale and emerging from barbarism. We have impressed

upon them the absolute necessity of relatives supporting relatives, and of parents providing entirely for their children before seeking help from the community.

Our aim has been to make them a sturdy, independent race, not a nation of paupers. To the credit of the Indian, be it said, that after four centuries of this degenerating system of dependence upon others, he has much in his character of genuine generosity and kindness, and that, given a fair opportunity, he has still a good deal of hardy independence and self-reliance. Since a complete social revolution has taken place amongst this people within the last twenty years, we find them no longer communists, but self-reliant workers, accumulating property by their own efforts, and responding cheerfully and heartily to the claims which a Christian civilization makes upon them.

With the small means at present at their disposal, they contribute to the cost of their school and hospital, and to the maintenance of the sick and poor who have no relatives to support them. They still administer their own laws—that is rule themselves—though under our guidance, but no help of any description is given indiscriminately by them or by us wherever it should be avoided.

To take, for instance, one small community of some two hundred people. Fifteen years ago the only property they possessed were their weapons, some miserable household chattels, and a few sheep, goats, and horses; whereas to-day that community is in possession of aggregate wealth amounting to close upon £1,000, in flocks and herds, goods, houses, and permanent gardens, not to mention a considerable sum of money in a savings' bank of their own. Three natives possess their own trading stores, whilst many others are itinerant traders. Their church they maintain almost entirely, and have already contributed a very large sum towards the building of it. The principle that we have taught, and which they have accepted, is that every man and woman must fight their own battle in life, but that they must also devote something to generous and voluntary charity, supplying their own needs first, and then out of their surplus helping others as they can. But, fortunately,

there is no very great need of charity, for their country is such that it can easily be made to maintain them if they will only exert themselves. It is sufficient that the broad principles of self-support and independence of character have been implanted in them, and that they must now rely principally on themselves to work out their own destiny.

SUHIN PIPE OF CARVED WOOD.

CHAPTER XX

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

The general opinion that the average Englishman seems to hold with regard to the Indian of the New World is that he is a stern, morose, and stoical being, capable of the cruellest deeds, and lacking in natural affection. This is not to be wondered at when we remember that very few Europeans have, during the present generation, come into close and intimate contact with the primitive red man, especially in South America.

The fact is that there is a great diversity of disposition among the Indian races, and it is no more possible to regard the American aborigines as alike in character than it would be to assume similarity of disposition among the various European races. I think, however, that I am justified in saying that there are two marked characteristics common to all Indians, one of which is their aversion from exhibiting their feelings before strangers, the other their suspiciousness of all foreigners. Confidence is a plant of slow growth, and the Indian does not readily confide in anyone.

As this work treats only of those Indians of the Chaco with whom I have lived, and to the study of whose character I have devoted myself for twenty years, I shall endeavour to deal as exhaustively as possible with the topic which is the subject of this chapter. It must be fully recognized that there is as much individual variety among them as among ourselves. But, regarded as a whole, their main characteristics are strong conservatism, lightheartedness, amiability, humour of a certain type, and a capacity for forming staunch friendships. They exhibit to a remarkable degree the power of self-control and

patience. They are emotional, but only under great provocation do they give way to outbursts of temper and become fanatical.

They undoubtedly possess physical courage. While they are by no means quarrelsome, they are intensely jealous. With this glance at their characteristics as a whole, I will now deal with this subject in detail.

As might naturally be expected among a heathen people, many of their customs are unquestionably evil, but there are a great number which, although they may appear to us childish and ridiculous, are after all perfectly innocent. They hold to their customs with great tenacity, and when urged to adopt a better and more practical way, they simply shrug their shoulders and say with a superior air, "Ikhawe mintime inningkoo" (That is not our custom). Although they recognize some of the advantages of European clothing, especially when engaged in certain kinds of work, they nevertheless discard it and adopt their native costume when mixing with their own people. Even the civilized Indians are conservative, and show little inclination to adopt foreign ways and customs, although they acknowledge that some of our ways are better and more seemly.

For example, an Indian considers it incorrect, on returning to his village after a prolonged absence, to take any notice of his nearest and dearest, such as his wife and children, or his mother and father. It is not because they lack affection, for after a little time they exhibit undisguised pleasure at meeting again. This custom is still maintained, in spite of the fact that for many years they have had ample opportunities of seeing how foreigners greet one another, and that we do not artificially stifle our real feelings as they do.

Their conservatism is also very marked in respect of their language, and incidentally entails much inconvenience. They strongly object to adopting foreign words, and when of necessity something is introduced for which they have no name, such as a kettle, rice, or a churn, they at once proceed to coin a compound word for it, which, as the reader will easily see, is most cumbersome and awkward, not only for us, but also for themselves. Their equivalents for these articles are respectively: *Methling-*

chischama-yingmin (the thing that causes water to be boiled), *ho-elyowea-apkatkuk-apuk* (like the eggs of the ant which has a big head), *eltikthlik-thlama-waitkya-namankuk-engminik* (the beater of the juice of the udder of the cow). Conservatism has undoubted advantages, but when it stands in the way of better methods, as in the above instances, devotion to the past becomes ridiculous.

In spite of the many drawbacks of their conservatism in this and other phases of their life, it has many decided advantages. One is that when once they adopt a new idea, they hold firmly to it. Another is that, not being readily influenced, they are not led to accept a new system such as Christianity without first carefully considering the step they are about to take, and therefore, when once won over, they are not given to change.

They are an exceedingly light-hearted and amiable people, delighting in the company of their fellows, and much given to feasting and merry-making. In their villages, the sound of laughter is the rule and not the exception, and this with old and young alike. They are not quick to take offence; even under the most trying conditions, exposed as they constantly are to the elements, and suffering frequently from both hunger and thirst, they seldom lose their good-humour.

In their wild nomadic life they often incur serious losses, as, for instance, a man may lose his only horse from snake-bite, or their flocks may suffer severely from the ravages of the jaguar and puma. Frequently their gardens are completely destroyed by a flight of locusts. But all these calamities they bear cheerfully, and they are of such a buoyant nature that they soon get over their troubles and difficulties. It is providential that it is so, otherwise their existence, miserable as it is in many other respects, would be sad to contemplate. They are remarkable people for making the best of their circumstances under all conditions and for extracting all the pleasure they can from a life which to many of us would be little better than a living death.

Their humour is of a peculiar kind, but I cannot say that it is of a very high order—in fact, it is rather childish. They break into peals of laughter over the slightest misfortune that

befalls their fellows, such as stumbling over a palm-stump, being thrown from a horse, slipping in a mud-hole, or any other trivial accident. But if anyone is hurt, their countenances immediately change, and they are full of sympathy and kindness.

Unlike the Spaniards of South America, who are extremely polite to the foreigner when he makes mistakes in speaking their language, the Indians roar with laughter when a wrong expression is used. In conversation, they are always on the alert to observe anything funny, and that not only with the foreigner, but also among themselves.

Their field of thought being very limited, they are continually seeking to draw comparisons between any remark made and some object in Nature. For example, when describing the appearance of some foreigner to them, I remarked that he was very tall and thin. They instantly laughed, and two or three exclaimed: "Just like a palm-tree!" I then said that he had a long flowing beard. There was another roar of laughter, and one cried out: "Just like a billy-goat!" On one occasion I was telling them about a comet, and they at once joked about its tail being long, like that of a monkey.

They are quick to observe anything peculiar in the dress or person of an individual, and most of their nicknames are based upon such peculiarities. They excel in story-telling, mostly of a humorous nature, and accompanied by much theatrical gesture.

While it is very difficult to win their confidence, yet when once you have acquired it, they trust you implicitly, and prove loyal and true. The popular idea seems to be that an Indian is a treacherous fellow, on whom no reliance can be placed, and who, although he may appear a friend for a time, is only so for his own sake, and will sooner or later turn against you.

My own experience, and that of my colleagues, has been that as a people they are no more treacherous than any other race. Firmly, but justly, dealt with, they have proved themselves well worthy of our trust. So firm is their reliance in us, and so strong is their belief that we seek their good, that for many years past they have clung to us through all our vicissitudes. Many times we have found it necessary to make them abandon their villages,

which they had built on improved methods under our instruction, and which had entailed some years of arduous work ; yet, in spite of the fact that they had settled down comfortably and were quite content, they cheerfully left everything behind, and moved to other localities which we thought more suitable situations for them to develop in.

They unhesitatingly accepted the foundation of their co-operative society and savings bank, the real benefit of which they did not experience for some time after, and not only handed over to our care what animals they possessed, but also the savings which had cost them much self-denial to accumulate.

When complications have arisen between the Indians and foreigners, I have always found them to have originated in the Indian's lack of confidence in the foreigner. This distrust arises from various causes. For example, if a foreigner acts insincerely or appears to break a compact, the Indian feels justified in acting in a like manner towards him. The white man at once regards this as treachery, failing to realize that he himself is really to blame. The foreigner may not wilfully intend to deceive the Indian or act inconsistently, but from his want of knowledge of Indian character, he is not able to explain his actions, and thus his motives are misconstrued.

The life of an Indian would be almost intolerable in such a country as the Chaco were it not for his characteristic patience and self-control in the face of the most adverse circumstances. The conditions of their country and climate are so unfavourable, they have so few resources, and their life is so primitive, that it is only by the most patient labour and calm endurance of suffering they are enabled to live.

Travelling and hunting in the Chaco are experiences of the most trying nature. The greater part of the day is often spent by these Indians wading in the swamps in search of fish, a burning tropical sun overhead, and myriads of poisonous insects continually harassing them. They have to spend days on the banks of a river, while with their rude instruments they fashion a dug-out canoe by which to cross. Their agriculture is carried on with the most primitive wooden diggers, which have taken

them days to manufacture. Even their ornaments entail laborious and patient toil.

They are exposed to all the vicissitudes of weather—the burning sun by day and often drenching showers of tropical rain by night. They frequently suffer from fever and chills, and for nights in succession are unable to sleep owing to the insect pests. It is a by no means uncommon sight to see a poor woman, seated all night long on the wet ground in pouring rain, nursing her dying child, powerless to relieve its sufferings or save its life. Under such and many other miserable conditions I have never known them to show signs of impatience, and seldom do they lose their habitual good-humour. It contrasts strangely with the want of endurance which we sometimes exhibit under similar conditions, and the Indian is very quick to remark on our poor-spirited behaviour. An instance in my own experience will illustrate this. One day, when travelling with a party of Indians, we camped during the mid-day heat near a forest. The mosquitos and sand-flies were unbearable, and I could not control my irritation. This greatly amused the Indians, and they asked me why I was angry. I told them that the reason was very obvious. On this they asked me if I knew the language of the mosquito. "Because if you do," they said, "it would be wise to speak hard words to them." This was to illustrate the wise maxim which the Indian fulfils in his daily life—"What cannot be cured must be endured." These same characteristics were observed by Dobrizhoffer in the Southern Indians nearly two centuries ago, and he aptly remarks: "What we denominate patience is nature with them — unlike Europeans, who at the smallest inconvenience get out of humour, grow angry, and, since they cannot bend heaven to their will, call upon hell."

It is generally supposed that Indians are very taciturn and unemotional. The exact contrary, however, is the case. It is true that they endeavour to hide their feelings, because it is good manners to do so, but deep, strong emotion is there nevertheless. To anyone thoroughly acquainted with the Indian, there is no mistaking the dancing joy in the eye when

friend meets friend, or the genuine smothered sobs when they stand by the grave-side of a beloved relative or companion; in fact, I have known men unable to attend a funeral, owing to the poignancy of their grief. At the sight of suffering I have seen strong men, in spite of themselves, burst into tears. On one occasion, while cutting a road through a palm-forest, an Indian let a tall palm-tree accidentally fall upon one of the party, breaking his leg. The man who cut down the tree, on realizing what had happened, stood over his friend and wept bitterly.

The Indian character is particularly difficult to understand, for it is full of contradictions—kindness and cruelty, gentleness and harshness, unselfishness and greed, courage and timidity, strong affection and callousness, emotion and stoicism, being often found strongly marked side by side in the same individual. This very man, for instance, who wept over his injured friend, himself, on a previous occasion, when badly burnt by the explosion of a can of powder, coolly remarked, while looking at his injuries, "Oh, how is this?" and, in spite of his suffering, he did not even utter a moan.

We have to be very careful indeed, when appealing to their religious feelings, to avoid sensationalism, for they are easily worked upon, and the result would be a superficial rather than a permanent gain.

In some phases of his life the Indian appears to exhibit considerable courage, while in others he shows just as marked a timidity. In reality he is brave in facing a danger which he thoroughly understands, but his lack of intelligence, training and education, his superstitions and his desire to stand well with his neighbours, frequently urge him on to cowardly acts. I have seen an Indian very much upset by a trivial wound, simply because there was much bleeding from it, and the whole look of it was alarming. On the other hand, a really dangerous injury, which, however, was not unsightly to the eye, the sufferer took quite calmly. A grave injury is very often accompanied by a severe shock, and, the nerves being dulled, little or no pain is felt. In such a case, the Indian onlookers treat it lightly, whereas a less serious injury, attended by great pain, they imagine to

be very severe indeed. This, of course, is the result of inadequate knowledge.

In the hunt, however, even in the case of the more dangerous animals, they display calmness and courage, because they thoroughly understand the difficulties which have to be faced. They will readily oppose themselves in combat with hostile tribes when they fully understand their enemies, but shrink from facing an unknown danger. When armed with only bows and arrows, they fear to engage with a force armed with inferior muzzle-loading guns, whereas in reality the latter are a greater danger to those who use them than to those against whom they are directed, and the former in the hands of Indians are really very efficient and deadly weapons.

In the question of moral courage they are decidedly weak, but we have every reason to believe that in the course of time, with adequate training, they will acquire moral force. Instances of moral courage have been known among them, which leads us to be hopeful of the future. To give only one illustration: I was once robbed of some grease, and appealed to the Chief of the village to assist in discovering the thief. After a time he returned, and said that several of the women had seen a dog in my hut, and that when they chased it out, it had grease upon its mouth. The Chief's son was standing by, and he boldly said: "It is a lie; my father is the dog." I had committed the care of my hut to this young fellow, and he therefore felt morally bound to defend my interests, though he knew that he would incur the enmity of his people for making this statement. It must be remembered that the superstitious fears of these people have such a strong hold over them as not only to affect their judgment, but even to undermine the very manhood of the race.

As a people they are excessively jealous, so much so that they avoid all rivalry and competition among themselves, and even in their games this is very noticeable. If one excels another, whether in games, the chase, apparel, or even in forming friendships, instead of the vanquished trying to regain his lost ground, he is content to give way to brooding jealousy. We have, there-

fore, to be very careful not to encourage this by any act of our own, and to abstain from making favourites. In dealing generally with the people, we treat heathen and Christian alike as far as possible, in order chiefly to avoid giving any encouragement to an Indian to accept Christianity for the sake of temporal advantage.

TÓÓTHLI CLAY VESSEL, PAINTED.

CHAPTER XXI

MORALS

It is no exaggeration to say that the name "Indian" generally suggests to the European mind three shortcomings of which he is supposed to be guilty—drunkenness, deceitfulness, and dishonesty. It is this threefold attribute which in popular opinion seems to put him outside the pale of ordinary intercourse with society. In dealing with this subject I wish to write without any bias, and shall state my opinions here, as elsewhere, purely from the standpoint of my many years of close association with every phase of Indian life, during which ample opportunity has been given me of making more than a superficial examination of the underlying facts.

Drunkenness is not one of their vices. Although various intoxicating liquors are manufactured by the Chaco tribes, and although the materials are so abundant that they could, if they desired, indulge in these drinks all the year round, they nevertheless confine the use of them to festive occasions only. The male adults alone are permitted to partake; the women and lads are not only debarred, but never even have the desire to taste intoxicants. They admit that their only reason for becoming intoxicated is to excite and stimulate themselves, with a view to promoting sociability. The only occasion when drink is used other than at a feast is in the very rare event of an execution. They then, out of kindness, always make the victim drunk before proceeding to kill him.

For the last ten years, in particular, these Indians have come into frequent and intimate contact with the foreigners on the River Paraguay, and the latter have for the sake of gain

endeavoured to induce them to take to the use of the cheap rum of the country, yet only a small proportion have given way to the temptation. They realize that this foreign rum is highly injurious, and admit its evil effects, although they speak well of their own manufacture. It is only fair to say that their native beer, although intoxicating, is comparatively harmless.

An amusing incident will show their opinion of the foreign beverage. An old Chief living near the River Paraguay had given way very greatly to the rum craving. He came in one day to my hut in a drunken condition. When he kindly asked me how I was, I replied that I was suffering from a very severe headache. "Ah," said he, "I told you that Paraguayan rum was no good, but you won't drink our stuff." He spoke feelingly, and evidently thought that my headache had the same origin as many of his own.

A peculiar form of madness is occasionally to be met with among the Indians. It does not seem to be hereditary, nor is it the result of drink or vice. As far as I have been able to learn it is attributable to four causes—fright, brain fever, the sun, and the secret administration of poison by the witch-doctors to those whom they desire to injure.

Sufferers from this malady evince a strong desire to be alone, and when the attack is severe they rush away into the woods. They eat and drink little, and seem to take hardly any rest or sleep. They appear to lose all fear of evil spirits, and do not hesitate to frequent haunted places, nor do they seem to fear wild animals. When in this state they frequently violate all Indian ideas of decency, one man having been reported to have dug up the bones of his father and to have gnawed them like a dog.

They not infrequently develop homicidal tendencies, and are consequently held in great fear by the people, especially as at night in particular they are in the habit of frequenting the villages, through which they have been known to rush in a naked and maniacal state.

One curious story was told me—the truth of which, however, I cannot vouch for—of a woman who was supposed to have

escaped from her grave, but was never seen again. Her foot-prints were observed erratically diverging from the path, sometimes entering a wood and sometimes apparently running in the open country. It is just possible that this story may be true, for granted that the severer rites of burial had not been performed, and that the woman had sufficient strength, it would be no difficult matter for her to free herself from the shallow, lightly-filled grave. From what we know of the Indians, it is not at all unlikely that a person might be buried alive; and in the event of this woman escaping from her grave, it is highly probable that madness would result, and that, as in the case of many similarly afflicted, she would fall a victim to the wild beasts of the forest.

As a people they are certainly not truthful; in fact, one hesitates to believe what a heathen Indian says. The only method of arriving at the truth is to cross-question, calculate, and weigh his statement, and to try to probe his motives. Nevertheless, they always regard lying with contempt, and one of their most bitter retorts is "You are a liar," or in their language, "Wanchik amyaa," which means "able . . . news," implying able to exaggerate, distort, or falsify the news. The tone they use when referring to a man as a liar is one of disgust and impatience, as much as to say, "It is no good paying any attention to what he says." Perhaps it is not strange that they despise lying, because even among ourselves we find the rule that men hate in others the very sin of which they are themselves guilty.

This national untruthfulness of the Indian is not practised simply for the sake of telling lies, because they quite appreciate the awkwardness of never being able to accept unquestionably the word of another, and they greatly admire the foreigner, who insists on his yea being yea and his nay, nay. They know at once where they stand with regard to him, and they like it rather than resent it.

One reason why the Indian lies is, again, because of his constitutional desire to be agreeable. He hesitates to tell the truth because he dislikes giving offence when he knows the truth

AN OLD WOMAN OF THE NORTH-WEST CLAN KNOWN AS THE "WHITE PARTRIDGES" (MOPAI-SENHIK)

Her probable age is between 80 and 90 years.

would be unpleasant. Then again he lies because his neighbour lies, and so he lies in self-defence. Another reason is that he is very fond of conversation, and delights in sensational news; but Indian life is so monotonous and uneventful that in order to raise an interesting conversation, it is necessary for him to exaggerate wildly. It is quite understood that no one believes what he says. Still, his exaggerations please, and while away an hour. They find also a great pleasure in trying to cap the lie in turn. The fact is that this form of news-telling takes the place among these people of "penny dreadfuls," trashy novels, and sensational newspaper articles.

As life among them is lived in accordance with socialistic principles, the Indian finds it unprofitable to tell the truth under certain circumstances, such as this: A party of visitors arrive at a village hungry and tired. They inquire feelingly after the welfare of the gardens in that locality, and exhibit a significant interest in the game-supply, and express the hope that their friends live a happy and comfortable life, and do not suffer from shortness of rations, as they do in their part of the country. If the villagers were to acknowledge the truth that they are well supplied, it would be most comforting news to the visitors, because by native law they would have to entertain them accordingly. They know only too well that if they confessed to abundant supplies, the visitors would prolong their stay until such time as the food was exhausted, for their rules of etiquette forbid them to speed even the unwelcome guest.

They know, too, that their visitors have not told the truth in their humble statement that their part of the country is poor and unproductive; so they in turn are quick to assure them that their crops that year have proved a failure; that game, owing to the evil action of the spirits, is practically non-existent; and that they themselves are on the verge of starvation. They constantly go out of their way to say how deeply hey regret that they are in such miserable circumstances, and that they are therefore unable to offer more than a meagre entertainment to their much-loved and welcome guests. The visitors are perfectly aware that there is not a word of truth in

all this, but politeness makes it impossible for them to contradict their hosts. They have, therefore, to be content with what little they get, and push on next day, greatly to the relief of the villagers.

The Indians have a great propensity for scandal, but this is common in all small communities, and perhaps there is really no more backbiting and tale-bearing among them than in some civilized circles. The Indian, though essentially a religious being, would, I fear, not take kindly to the confessional. He has no objection whatever to confess the sins of his companions, whether genuine or invented, but his pride—so proverbial in the savage—restrains him very powerfully from confessing his own shortcomings. So well is this tale-bearing understood that, although it causes heart-burning, no one who knows the people would ever think of judging an Indian by the scandal in circulation about him.

Scandal about each other is not circulated with the same object as their exaggeration of news leads to—namely, to make their conversation entertaining. Mere exaggeration irritates no one, but scandal does, and when the Indian gives way to it, it is with a purpose. He does so either from revenge or to gain his own ends. A native, for example, has stolen something. He knows that, if discovered, he will get into serious trouble, so in course of conversation he expresses his grief at having to insinuate such a charge, but he has grave suspicions that So-and-so has been guilty of the theft. In this way he tries to ward off suspicion from himself.

Sometimes this desire to save himself at the expense of another ends rather awkwardly and ludicrously for the culprit. On one occasion a very plausible, oily-mannered savage of my acquaintance was employed by me as cook. I had a quantity of *charqui* drying in the sun on a line. During my siesta this man was ordered to keep a strict watch upon the meat, in case of any thieving. After my rest, he came smilingly towards me, remarking that it had been a great effort for him to keep awake during the hot midday hours, but that his fidelity and love for me, and his interest in my meat, had been so great that he had

succeeded in overcoming his drowsiness, and it was well that he had, because a large dog had come along while he was absent for a few moments, and had walked off with some of the meat, and he showed me the empty space on the line. In his hand he held a few strips of dirt-bedraggled meat, and told me that it was all he had been able to rescue from the dog.

I had my suspicions, and accordingly met guile with guile. I thanked him warmly for his interest, telling him that he was a good fellow, and in friendly Indian style I embraced him round the waist, at the same time feeling in the folds of his blanket. I then exclaimed: "Hulloa! what is this?" and pulled out, much to his confusion, a handful of the meat which the dog was accused of stealing. Though these instances may reflect rather seriously on the Indian character, yet it may be said in extenuation that for a real friend he would often willingly bear blame, and would not shrink from lying to defend him.

The Indian is peculiar in some of his traits of character. If you doubt his word when he denies having committed some offence, he will repeat his denial two or three times; if you still doubt him, he will admit to having told a falsehood, and will even exaggerate the offence, and will say that he has been guilty not only of this, but of many others, although in reality he has not committed any of them. It amounts to this: "If you will not believe me," he says, "when I speak the truth, and will only be satisfied with lies, I will lie as much as you like, to please you." There is a great deal of truth in the Irishman's statement, that "a lie ceases to be a lie, if it is a big enough one." A lie is essentially intended to deceive, and the sin of lying is in the evil that results from deceit. It is not essentially a lie when a man says "it is raining cats and dogs," for no one but a child would misunderstand the figure of speech. Therefore when an Indian really tells the truth, but on being doubted and pressed, admits to having committed an impossible amount of crime, he is simply working on the logical system of reducing the thing to an absurdity. The Indian argues it in this way: "It is evident it is not the truth you want, but falsehood, and as this is so, you shall have as much as you want." The instances

given above may be classed as polite lying to visitors, lying to screen from blame, and sarcastic lying.

Although the Indian has much practice in telling falsehoods, he is not an adept at it, for when once you thoroughly know him, he tells the truth by his face and manner, when lying with his lips. It is certainly folly to try and worm the truth out of an Indian by persistent cross-questioning, and doubting him. A great deal of his lying disposition is the result of weak character and want of individual independence, the result of old social conditions. Now that they are becoming a Christian and self-reliant people, they are proportionately more truthful.

As far as dishonesty is concerned, the worst enemy of the Lenguas could not accuse them of being a thieving nation. Among themselves they are fairly honest, and any attempt at pilfering is severely censured. I have even heard of one case in which an habitual thief was put to death, when all means of curing him failed.

We have lived among them for twenty years, and our houses are of such a nature that they could easily be entered, and even our lock-fasts would offer a poor resistance to any native desirous of breaking into them, and yet we have had very little reason to complain of stealing on the part of the Indians. When such a thing has occurred, I must confess that it has been chiefly due to our own carelessness in putting unnecessary temptation in their way.

Our animals—sheep, goats, horses, and cattle—have never been wilfully interfered with, although they roam over a large extent of wild country. Only on one or two occasions have the natives appropriated our animals, and that unwittingly, and in every case that I can remember except one, we have received compensation. In times of drought, some of our animals have wandered to such great distances that we have never recovered them. Naturally we cannot say definitely what became of them, as they may have become mixed up with the cattle of the Paraguayans at the river, or killed by wild beasts, or possibly by hungry parties of Indians, who were unacquainted with our stock. They have, during recent years, killed cattle belonging

to the Paraguayans, but in many cases this has been done to settle old scores, and this the Indian would not regard as stealing.

We have always found them exact in paying a debt, and oftentimes an Indian has arrived at our stations, and presented payment for something he had received from us years before, and which we had altogether forgotten.

Among themselves they have a system of reservation. If a native sees a tree containing honey, or a bottle-trunk tree suitable for a canoe, a fruit-tree, a patch of garden-ground, a collection of fire-wood, a nest, a patch of fibre-plants or the like, he notifies his people that he has appropriated it, and they all respect such ear-marking.

Travelling through the country, we frequently pass by a village, deserted for a time by its inhabitants, who may be on a hunting expedition, or at a neighbouring feast. In this village, lying about within sight of any passers-by, we often find a number of household goods, weapons, implements, and even the products of the chase, which they intend eventually to barter, and which they have left behind for convenience. Rarely do we hear of an Indian missing any of such property. This surely speaks volumes for the common honesty of the people.

It is perhaps natural that these so-called savages should be generally regarded as a cruel and stern people, and possessed of a hard nature, but this is by no means the case. The Indian is undoubtedly undemonstrative in manner, with an austere bearing, but a close and intimate acquaintance with him reveals a great amount of fine feeling and kindness of heart, deep though this may be beneath the surface. I have had ample opportunity of noting many generous actions done, not only between themselves, but also for us, whom they have learnt to trust and regard as their friends.

I once knew an Indian Chief who lost his wife, and as he could no longer bear to remain in the same place bereft of her company, he travelled east to the River Paraguay, to get away from the old associations, taking with him his daughter and some of his followers. In this, he was not simply carrying out

the Indian rule of at once abandoning a place where a death has taken place, impelled by his superstitious fears, but there was a deeper feeling of grief behind it. Misfortune dogged him to his new encampment, for he had only been there a few weeks, when his daughter died. She was about twenty-four years of age, and his only child. This loss so upset him that he at once began the return journey to the west. He only travelled about thirty-five miles, to a place called Sohoyamathla. On arrival there his grief completely overcame him. He sought out a venomous snake and allowed it to bite him in several places, and, refusing all help, he shortly afterwards died in great agony.

I was much touched by the thoughtfulness and unselfishness of an Indian who once visited my camp. He was a man from a far-distant village, and had remained with me for a few weeks. As he had been helpful in many ways, I gave him a few luxuries to eat when he came to say good-bye. These consisted of a few lumps of sugar and four hard biscuits. He ate one of the latter, and putting the other three into his waist-bag, he said he would take them to his mother and his wife. I told him to eat the sugar, as it was sweet like honey, and that he would enjoy it. He ate one lump rather suspiciously, but was delighted with the taste, and I expected him to eat the remainder, but he put them also into his bag, saying, "How pleased my little child will be with these!" Although this man must have been often hungry on his long tramp of quite one hundred and fifty miles to the west, yet he kept these few luxuries for those whom he loved.

In the event of an Indian being bitten by a snake, although he was a stranger and at a village thirty or forty miles away, I have known natives hurry off to render assistance, and sit up quite cheerfully for one or two nights, doing all that their scant knowledge afforded to relieve him and if possible save his life. And this they will do without any personal gain whatever to themselves, but out of pure disinterested human kindness.

I have myself experienced many gracious and thoughtful actions from Indians. Once, when at Thlagnasinkinmith, I was

soaked to the skin, and sat shivering in the cold south wind. My Indian companions were in no better case, but a Chief, who was crouching over the fire, took off a kind of shirt which he wore, and which was fairly dry, and insisted upon my putting it on.

On another occasion I was sleeping with some Indians on the wet sodden banks of a stream. I was lying near the camp-fire, but the little covering I had was not sufficient to keep me warm, and I could only get fitful sleep. An Indian who was lying near me, not knowing that I was awake at the time, rose up and took off his own blanket, and, after stealthily spreading it over me, he brought the fire nearer to where I was lying. He was content to lie down near the fire, naked as he was and exposed to the cold, damp night air, and settled down to pass the night as best he could with such warmth only as the fire afforded. I watched him for a little while, but could not submit to deprive him of his only covering; so, pretending to wake up and to discover what had taken place, I offered to give it back, but he would not accept it. I then insisted on his lying down with me and sharing it, which he eventually did.

The Indian is essentially polite in his own peculiar way, and his is no superficial politeness. When Bishop Stirling and his wife visited me at Riacho Fernandez, the Indians realized that he was a great Chief, and were careful to treat their visitors accordingly. In crossing to the island in a dug-out canoe, when we approached the land, the Indian in the bow jumped ashore, and was about to offer his hands to Mrs. Stirling to help her out, when he suddenly remembered that they were covered with dirt and the fat of some fish which he had just been eating. He told her to wait a moment, and spat on his hands, afterwards wiping them with a by no means clean coloured handkerchief which he wore round his neck. Taking off this dirty handkerchief, he spread it over his hand and then proffered his help, which was accepted, without his realizing that he had made matters no better than before. He had good intentions, however, and would have resented a refusal of his help, for Indians always look for politeness in return.

MORALS

The moral condition of the Indians in many phases of their life, and especially in the relation of the sexes, cannot be in any true sense compared with that of civilized Christian nations, owing to their different circumstances and environment. But, judged from their heathen standpoint, they cannot be termed vicious, but perfectly natural.

To take marriage as the leading example, the Indian man or woman is free to make his or her own choice of a partner. It is true that their choice is influenced by their parents and friends. The capability of the woman in weaving, pottery-making, and general usefulness is also taken into account. As native law requires that the man must leave his own people, and join those of his wife, he is influenced by the conditions of her country, such as its fertility, its richness in game, its dryness and altitude, and comparative freedom from mosquitos, and also its good water and abundance of fish. The social life of her village is inquired into, such as the frequency of feasts, and whether the disposition of her clansmen is friendly and sociable. The woman, whose main object in life is to feed well, and to have as little drudgery as possible, seeks a husband of a mild and kind disposition, who will, as far as possible, be subservient to her rule, and who has the reputation of being a good hunter and gardener. If she belongs to a border-clan, and her people are frequently at war, she also considers the question of her husband's physical strength and capability as a warrior, so that she may feel safe under his protection.

A wedding, as we should call it, does not take place; and there is only a marriage on approval, corresponding to our engagement, although the couple live together. No marriage is considered binding by native law until a child is born, and if this does not take place within a reasonable time they are justified in separating, if they so wish. But when once a child is born to them, even should the child die or be put to death, they are considered to be bound to each other for life.

Indians are monogamists. Polygamy and polyandry do exist, but for necessary reasons which will be explained later. There is no such thing as a spinster known amongst them, nor have they

even a word expressing such a condition. Not only in theory, but also in actual fact, every marriageable woman is married. She may become a widow and then remain single, but this is rare, except in the case of old widows. But to be single altogether is unknown and inconceivable. The reason for this is very clear. Women are rather fewer in number than men, owing to the custom of infanticide; therefore a woman has no need to remain unmarried for the lack of a partner. Their mode of life and state of society are such that every marriageable girl must have a recognized protector.

There is undoubtedly considerable laxity of morals amongst them, viewed from the Christian standpoint, yet when unfaithfulness occurs on the part of the husband or the wife it is invariably because the marriage has been one of convenience and not of love. If the Indian could be brought to marry purely from affection (and he certainly possesses this), unfaithfulness would be almost unknown among them. I think I am perfectly justified in saying that, in the few cases where marriage has been the result of affection, the couple have trusted each other, and this trust has rarely been misplaced. One reason for the lack of marriages based on affection is that in the primitive state of the people they mix in a very small circle, and meet with no partner with whom they could mate, except those whom they have played with from childhood. Little choice, therefore, is left them, and there is not that novelty of a fresh face and character which tends to become captivating, and eventually leads to love.

Polygamy is not the natural instinct of the Indian. It is only found to exist among tribes where, owing to devastating wars, the men have been so reduced in number that the women largely outnumber them, and the tribe would be in danger of extinction if monogamy were insisted upon. This prospect, coupled with the fact that their conditions of life require that every woman should be married, forces them to adopt polygamy, but it gradually ceases as the balance of the sexes is restored.

For an opposite reason, although to a much smaller extent, polyandry is sometimes met with on the frontiers. The tribes

practising polygamy lie on the south-west frontier, and are strong and powerful, with warlike instincts. They are strong enough to resist invasion, and the wars are carried on chiefly in the neutral zone between the hostile nations. The males naturally suffer the most, whereas on the north frontier the tribes are weaker and less warlike, and are opposed by superior forces, which invade their country and carry off their women, who are sold in considerable numbers for immoral purposes in the foreign settlements. An Indian would not under any circumstances deal in this way with his own tribeswomen, but stimulated by the hatred of tribe and race, they go so far as to dispose thus of their captives to foreigners. The blame lies at the door of the foreign race which encourages such a traffic. For this reason, the men of these northern tribes far outnumber the women, and consequently the only alternative left them is for several men to have a common wife. To this the woman does not object, because she is freed from all irksome labour, and is well cared for by her husbands.

I know of only one instance of polyandry that ever existed among the Lenguas, and that was in the case of a woman exceedingly capable and intelligent, but of an exceptionally wayward disposition. She had two husbands living in different parts of the country. Her conduct was strongly condemned, especially by the women of her tribe, and she was eventually forced to content herself with the senior husband.

There is much more that could be written on this subject, which is of intense interest from an anthropological or scientific point of view, and which lies at the bottom of many social evils in the Chaco and in our own country too. These evils cause us great difficulty in our social as well as Christian work among this people. Some of these characteristics, however, although a source of much evil, have much that is good in them, and indicate a very high degree of advancement. Even the most scientific thinkers would rejoice if Europeans could attain to it. Obviously, from their very nature, I cannot deal with them in this work.

CHAPTER XXII

SYSTEM OF DEALING WITH INDIANS

The Indian is essentially a child, only he is a full-grown one, and, living a free and unrestrained life, he is apt to prove at times a dangerous child.

His view of life; his religious speculations; his humours; his seriousness over trifles and incapacity to weigh matters; his love of stories; his desire to be taken notice of and petted; his simple pride which makes him resent being ignored; his desire to imitate his seniors in knowledge, culture, and manners, and his keen sense of justice are all characteristics which he possesses in common with the ordinary child. Firmness, sympathy, patience, justice, and kindness are therefore essential qualifications in anybody who would dominate the Indian for his good.

It is frequently alleged that many races such as these are void of a moral or religious sense. The Tierra del Fuegian natives have been classed in this category. Even Dobrizhoffer said of the Abiponi Indians: "Reasoning is a process, troublesome, and almost unknown to them; it is therefore no wonder that the contemplation of terrestrial or celestial objects should inspire them with no idea of the creative Deity." But the Indian, in reality, does reason, does wonder about the mysteries of heaven and earth, the present, the past, and the future; as, however, his reasoning faculties have not been developed, he thinks and draws conclusions as a child does.

When it is borne in mind that we had to deal with a people speaking a strange and hitherto unknown language, whose thoughts, ideas, and expressions were utterly different from

those of any known people, it will be seen that the task of tutoring them was attended with gigantic difficulties.

I found them a people without any central government, with very little attempt at government of any kind, controlled only by a somewhat lax public sentiment, with crude religious ideas and customs, which in the course of numberless generations had lost much of their primary significance.

Their industries were few and of comparatively small importance. They had little or no idea of private property. They had lost all cohesion and desire to improve themselves, being content in a great measure to exist only for the present moment. They were a slowly dying race without hope in this life or in the life to come. The various tribes were at enmity with one another, and waging wars of extermination.

Our task was first of all to make ourselves acquainted with the language, political constitution (such as it was), history, habits, customs, religious beliefs, and the possible capacity of the people; to arrest the decline and decay of the race; to bind the various tribes together; to give them a system of government; to raise them to the level of property-holders; to induce them to adopt an industrious, settled, and regular life; to instil into them a higher moral sense; to awaken a desire for culture and progress; to fit them to receive the offer of the Paraguayan Government of citizenship in that Republic; to make them useful members of society, a people who could bear their part in the development of their own land; and to qualify them in every way to take their due place as a unit in the growing population of a great continent.

We realized that the only way in which we could succeed in doing so was by implanting in them a pure, living form of Christianity, which would become the basis of their political, social, and moral constitution. Therefore we determined at the outset to lead, as far as our frail natures would allow, a simple, pure, and practical Christian life among these people whom we desired to convert, realizing from past experience that they would watch and criticize our every action with lynxlike eyes. We were to these primitive people—if one may say so—their

Bible, their rule of faith; and if through any inconsistency on our part we failed to give them a true example, we knew our work must prove an utter failure.

It is difficult for those at home to realize the intense strain which this meant, and the reader who would do us justice must consider our position and circumstances. We were cut off for years from our fellows, with a heathen atmosphere around us, and deprived of intercourse with higher and nobler souls. We were young men with little experience of life, who had to fight for the mastery over ourselves, without the many aids which those in the home country possess. Our supply of literature was exceedingly limited, and our opportunities for mental improvement still more restricted. We were surrounded by strong temptations, poorly fed, miserably housed—often for months not housed at all—debilitated in nerve and physique by the climate, our stamina reduced by fever and hardship, and continually irritated by the perpetual insect plagues. We were subjected to strain through anxiety for the success of our work, and through the continual restraint which we required to exercise over ourselves, and added to this was the constant possibility of personal danger.

It is one thing to be brave, courageous and dashing in the company of hundreds of our fellows, cheered on by an admiring nation, and constantly under the public eye; but it is quite another thing when one is alone in a strange land, among a hostile and superstitious people, with little communication even with our few friends at home, and utterly forgotten and ignored by the world at large.

Just as children rely upon the man who is strong, resolute and brave, so do these Indians. Weakness may be pitied by them, but it is not respected. Physically weak men, unless backed by the two qualities of firmness and courage, are apt to be trifled with by them. The Indians are quick to test and find out what a new-comer is made of, and it is necessary to take a firm stand with them from the beginning in order to avoid falling into the traps they so skilfully lay.

It is a difficult matter to win the love and confidence of the

Indian, but since these were absolutely necessary to the success of our work, we at once laid ourselves out to gain them by endeavouring to show our love for them and confidence in them.

In the early years we took pains to manifest our good-will towards them in every way possible, and were cheered by finding it returned. Frequently, for instance, when travelling, if we perceived an old woman or a frail man suffering from fatigue, we would dismount from our horses and make them take our places, an act which the Indians would readily appreciate. While camping in the forest on a stormy night, we have shared our blankets with the most needy, and by many such little acts of kindness, sought to convince them of our brotherliness. In numerous cases the Indians have proved that they were quite as willing to display kindness to us, as I have instanced in the previous chapter.

But while we desired to evince our love for the Indian and treat him as a brother, we recognized the necessity of not being governed by mere sentiment, but of exercising practical love. "Love worketh no evil," and if we, through mistaken benevolence, weakened the Indian's character, we should be doing him harm instead of good. To give a lazy, idle man food, when he ought to work, is not a kindness, but a wrong. "If a man will not work, neither shall he eat," and therefore we always sought to blend love with strictness and justice.

On one occasion I was travelling with a party of Indians, some of the younger men, including myself, being mounted. On coming to a difficult swamp, which had to be crossed, I at once dismounted, and perceiving an opportunity of teaching a lesson, I explained that I was considerate enough to let some woman with young children ride my horse while I walked. The Indians greatly approved of this, and, accordingly, a woman with two children mounted my steed. But my young companions exhibited no inclination to follow my example. On perceiving this, I insisted upon their dismounting and giving place to the weaker, informing them that as they were the relatives and friends of these women and children, it was their duty rather than mine to dismount, and that, even if I had not done so

myself, I should have insisted upon their doing it. They obeyed, but not with a very good grace; nevertheless, the whole party thoroughly approved of the step I had taken. It was not a course which they would have thought of taking of their own accord. To be kind and considerate in this way was new to them, but the moral was not lost upon them.

On another occasion, after I had lived two or three years amongst them, I happened to be employing a number of men from a western village, and had agreed to supply them with food in return for their work. The young Chief of their party, however, a vain, conceited, and idle fellow, declined to work. When midday came, the men were told they might sit round the pot and eat, and the young Chief presented himself with the rest. I had frequently impressed upon the natives the necessity of all able-bodied men honestly earning their living in some way or other, and had told them that wilful loafers had no claim on the charity of others. I now remonstrated with the Chief to this effect, but he insisted upon sharing the food. To have given way would have implied to the Indians one of two things, either that I was afraid of their Chief, or else that I was not very anxious about insisting upon what I had so often taught them. In either case the effect upon them would have been bad, and therefore to ignore the incident would have meant weakness on my part. So I ordered the Chief to leave the pot, and, as he failed to obey me, I forcibly removed him. There was some opposition, and as the men seemed disinclined to eat without him, I upset the pot and its contents on the ground. I anticipated further trouble, but in the afternoon they again began work, and sat quietly down to their evening meal when it was ready. The young Chief, however, was absent, having gone off in a huff.

The Indians quite acknowledged that the arrangement I had made with them, on the basis of "so much work so much food," was just, and that I was warranted in refusing their Chief the right to eat. They had not expected me to take such a strong hand in the matter, but I never had any further trouble on this score.

The Indian is a great admirer of courage, and is courageous himself in certain ways. One of their favourite tests was to come to me in the middle of the night, when we happened to be camped near some great forest. While sound asleep beneath my mosquito-net, they would roughly awaken me, exclaiming that a large jaguar was close at hand, and that I had better see to my safety. They behaved as naturally as they could, but they rather overacted, and, knowing them well enough to detect an absence of earnestness in their tone, I was convinced it was only a hoax, and so bade them begone and leave me to sleep. After playing this and similar tricks several times upon me, they eventually concluded that I was neither of a timid disposition, nor was I to be easily deceived.

Again, children have a strong sense of justice; and the Indian likewise respects justice, even when he is the loser. Let me illustrate this by an experience in which I was to some extent the sufferer.

There were rumours current in the village in which I was then located that we were in imminent danger of an attack from the Northern Kisapang Tribe. One day a Chief came to me in breathless alarm saying that he had just found a Kisapang scout in the act of walking off with my horse, leading it by an Indian belt, which he had tied round its neck; but that he had rescued it just in time, and had brought back the horse with the belt still round its neck. There were signs, he said, of a party of Kisapang in the vicinity of the village, and that in all probability they had taken some of the other horses. The women and children showed great alarm, and, together with some of the leading Indians, he begged me to give them powder and shot for their guns, asserting that, if the Kisapang once knew that they were well armed, they would be afraid to attack the village.

Knowing how terrible would be the consequences if an attack actually took place, I agreed to their request, but on condition that they should not go farther than the near vicinity of the village, and on no account provoke an encounter, but merely remain on the defensive; and, further, that they were to return to me all the powder and shot not used.

They seemed much relieved. But I thought it strange that, wandering about as they continually were in search of game, they had not before detected signs of the Kisapang in the neighbourhood, and that visitors who had recently arrived from the north had brought no news of any hostile movement among them.

That day my Indians sent out a scouting-party, and a few shots were fired by way of warning that the village was well armed. The next day they again went out, and did not return till night; but when they did arrive they brought in three large *thlenach* (deer), saying they had seen no signs of the Kisapang.

My suspicions were aroused, so on the following day I recommended them to go out again, as probably the Kisapang were still in the neighbourhood; but they declared that they were quite satisfied that their enemies had gone.

Presently I summoned the men to my hut, and ordered them to hand back the powder and shot left over. They readily did so; but I informed them, greatly to their discomfiture, that the amount was short of what it should be. When they declared that that was all they had left, I replied that I had always understood they had only one name for the Kisapang, but I had since discovered they had another name for them. "Oh no!" they said; "there is only one name." "Not at all," I replied; "you also call them *thlenach*." They looked surprised; but I informed them that I had counted the shots they had fired, and that I had also observed the deer which they had brought in; therefore I demanded the hides of the deer shot in compensation for the ammunition that was short. They were at first very angry and disappointed, seeing that the price demanded was far in excess of the value of the powder and shot, but recognizing that their stratagem had failed, they admitted the justice of my claim.

CHAPTER XXIII

TEACHER AND PUPIL

The first thing that the white man requires to do in order to become a successful mentor to an alien people is not, as many would suppose, to study the language and begin to teach, but to get rid of his inborn feeling of superiority and self-righteousness, for his great difficulty in dealing with such a people is to see anything from their point of view. Unless he can clearly perceive their position and enter into their feelings; unless he can realize their difficulties, and appreciate the efforts that they make to combat them; unless, again, he can see, not only the weak, but also the good points in their character, there can be no sympathy between him and them. And without a genuine feeling of sympathy he will never be successful in imparting higher ideals to others.

Many, besides missionaries, have felt keenly the attitude frequently taken by the new-comer, who looks around him with a conscious air of superiority and of power, and fancies he sees at a glance the weak points and secrets of failure. How often we find some traveller devoting a few months to a flying visit to some centres of a great and populous country, and then writing and lecturing upon it with the greatest possible assurance; and, strange to say, people at home pay an absurd amount of attention to his observations. He himself is possibly quite sincere, and, in his ignorance, implicitly believes that he has grasped all the salient points.

In the heathen world we find much that is good, much that is essentially true, much that is worth possessing which we ourselves do not possess; and the wise teacher, with a proper

humility of mind, accepts, appreciates, and uses what is good, however little it may be; and with a like humility he is ready to admit that we ourselves are by no means perfect, and have little to boast of in spite of our advantages over the heathen.

On more than one occasion I have been reminded of the example of that great missionary St. Paul, when he said, "Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you." On New Year's Day, 1894, for example, seeing a favourable opportunity to have a serious and pertinent talk with Keamapsithyo (Philip), the first Indian who had shown any really marked interest in Christianity, I walked out with him some distance from the village, and sat down on the bank of a stream.

After a long conversation, I told him that, although his knowledge was exceedingly rudimentary, chiefly owing to my inadequate command of his language, and consequent inability to put the truths of the Gospel clearly before him, yet he had been able to comprehend sufficiently to warrant him in deciding there and then to abandon heathenism once and for all, and follow Christ as his Chief. He replied that it was as I had said, only that I had not seemed to understand how sinful his past life had been; he knew that, to follow Christ, he would have to give up that life of sin, but, as it had such a hold upon him, he felt that he could not; furthermore, his sins had been so many that he felt sure the Christ about whom he had been taught could not possibly go so far as to forgive him. He added that, of course, in my case it was different, because I was a good man, as all the Indians knew, and doubtless Christ had been quite pleased to receive me, seeing that I had never committed such and such sins. In his own case, however, it must be otherwise.

I went over with him in detail the particular sins which he had instanced, and assured him that many of them I had myself committed innumerable times; that others, although not committed in act, I had committed in intention; and that he knew, according to the theories of his own people, as well as from the teaching of Christ Himself, that the sin of the will was

as much a sin as the deed itself. I tried to convince him that I was really in no way a better man than himself, in spite of his opinion of me and that of his people, who had only judged me superficially, yet Christ had accepted me, and therefore would accept him. I showed him that I still had the same temptations as he had, only the difference was that my will was to do good and abstain from evil; that this was not a natural, but a changed will, given me by God; and although I certainly did things of which I did not approve, yet it grieved me when I did, and that I was continually striving to overcome these failings. I then expounded the doctrine that, in such a case, will-power would be given to overcome evil in proportion as the desire to overcome was strong. I pointed out that, by his own confession, he desired to lead a good life, and that, as I had already made it clear, his past guilt could be atoned for. Although he would continue to stumble for long after taking this step, I explained how he would be given strength to subdue his natural weakness; how, as his knowledge increased, and his experience ripened, and his desire tended unswervingly in the right direction, so he would in time come to realize the happiness of doing right, and discover that strength to do it would be imparted to him. After this, without giving any decision one way or another, he broke off the conversation and left me.

It was not until four years and a half afterwards that I learnt the immediate result of our talk. He was preaching to his countrymen, and in the course of his address stated distinctly and unhesitatingly that it was on that day that he definitely resolved sincerely to endeavour to carry out what I had advised. He remarked that it was only the perception that suddenly dawned on him of the similarity of my own condition with his that encouraged him to make the effort.

This was Christian sympathy, and through it the first convert, Philip, was won for Christ.

It is a great mistake to think that all heathen peoples are without any moral code, and void of any striving after higher things. As St. Paul says: "For when the Gentiles, which have

not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, they are a law unto themselves, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another." The Indians of the Chaco distinctly possess a moral code of laws. I have never yet, during my twenty years of sojourn among them, met with any Indian who regarded theft, murder, adultery, false-witness, and covetousness as anything but sin; and, furthermore, they not only hold the act as sin, but the intention or desire to commit the act also as sin.

There is no subject which interests the Indian so much as that concerning the spiritual world, and the very lowest of the heathen are intensely interested in any questions connected with the origin of the universe, or with man and his probable destiny. They have much in their religious belief upon which we can build in inculcating Christianity, and it is necessary that the Christian teacher should thoroughly understand the religious theories of the people to whom he preaches. He is wise who, in bringing to them the true light of the Gospel, appeals to their own groping in the darkness after something they cannot grasp. St. Paul, on Mars Hill, referred to the altar dedicated to the unknown God. The Athenians realized that there was something lacking which they did not know, so Paul at once took advantage of this in introducing his subject, for he said: "Him declare I unto you." We had to begin by declaring the existence of the Creator; then, we went on to utilize the Indian theory already referred to, that all things were created by some great power symbolized by a beetle. We explained that orginally man knew the truth concerning this Creator, but that, from certain causes which we dwelt upon, he had either forgotten or had acquired erroneous ideas about Him. We made it clear that all mankind would have been sunk in error to the present day had it not been that the Creator, in His kindness, had revealed the truth afresh, and that we had obtained this revelation from an ancient people to whom it had been given.

Their theory that a race of powerful beings had preceded man tallied, we said, in the main with our own, and we accepted their belief in powerful and numerous spiritual hosts, with this

difference : that whereas they seemingly believed that such were only evil, we, on the contrary, through revelation, knew that there were both good and evil spirits, and that, though according to their tenets the Creating Spirit had ceased to exercise any governance over that which He created, yet we knew that He did govern in the heavens above and in the earth beneath. We explained how His governance was beneficial ; but His laws were so modelled that evil naturally brought its own punishment, and we brought many illustrations from their own life and surroundings to bear upon these subjects. A man, for example, planted a small seed, and in due time that seed, without any intervention on his part, became in a way which he could not explain a large edible fruit. Now, whether the Creator, by a special act, either by Himself or through His agents, produced this result, or whether in the beginning He implanted in the seed the capacity to develop in the soil that received it, under certain given conditions, into the fruit, the cause was the same. And as that fruit was of service to both man and beast, it indicated kindness and thoughtfulness on the part of the original Creator.

Mosquitos were also, according to their own theories and also ours, the work of the same Creator, though they held the mosquito to be altogether evil. But the problem whether this insect was really altogether a pest, or played some necessary part in Nature, was due to a want of knowledge on their part. They could not say that the mosquito was not useful ; they could say that, as far as they were concerned and aware, the mosquito was injurious. But they all knew that if they cleared a certain space around their villages, and selected a site far enough removed from swamp and forest, the mosquitos tended to disappear in that part. One thing they did not know was that the Creator intended man to be master to a great extent of his circumstances. The Creator had given him intelligence and power to combat difficulties, and by taking certain measures they could to a great extent minimize the evil which the mosquito wrought.

In numerous other ways we sought to train the Indian mind

to connect cause and effect, and to induce him to use to the utmost those means which the Almighty had put within his power of elevating himself and improving his position. From the very beginning we were quick to realize that we were dealing with a people in its infancy. Whether they had been at some remote time an organized and civilized nation or not mattered little. The fact remained that when we found them they were in the condition of primitive savages.

There were two courses open to us. One was to look upon them as a moribund race, and to endeavour to bring them speedily to a knowledge of the Gospel before they should become extinct. A human soul, whether of the higher races or of the savage, is of such incalculable value that no expense or effort can be too great to spend on its redemption. But while fully comprehending this, we also grasped the fact that there were hundreds of millions in this world who were continually being replenished by new generations, and requiring direction and help towards the higher life as much as this scattered people in the Chaco. It was therefore a question of calculating how best we could utilize the limited means at our disposal in the uplifting of the human race. After careful consideration, we came to the conclusion that this people need not inevitably become extinct, and that, furthermore, there was every possibility of their increasing, developing, and eventually occupying a useful position in the world.

Having settled this in our own minds, the second question was how best we could accomplish our object. All who understand anything about the financial condition of Missions know well that the means at our disposal are so limited that every farthing is of the utmost importance. We felt, therefore, that we could not honestly contemplate devoting the time of a number of men, and even the continued limited amount of money necessary for such a work, to ministration among such a small section of the heathen world. Our policy was, therefore, from the first to aim at making this Mission as soon as possible self-supporting and self-expanding. We were entirely opposed to any attempt at encouraging these Chaco heathen to accept

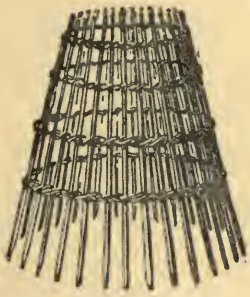
Christianity through the hope of material gain. We impressed upon them that if they followed our teaching it would ultimately lead to their material improvement, but we unhesitatingly gave them to understand that such improvement could only be attained by their own efforts. We were willing to instruct them so far as was necessary, and to lead and direct them until such time as they should be able to fend for themselves, but we made it clear that their destiny depended upon themselves. We therefore determined to give away nothing, and to insist upon their contributing towards the expenses of the work instead of depending on assistance from us.

This great Chaco region would require a small army of Europeans to evangelize, and the pressing needs elsewhere are so great that such an attempt would be unwarranted. We therefore urged upon our first converts the necessity of themselves bearing the responsibility of evangelizing their countrymen.

Of course, there are many who object to such a people having the reins of government put into their hands until they are perfectly fitted to exercise it. We agree that it is necessary for many years to come to keep a controlling hand upon this young nation and Church, but we contend that the only way in which they will learn to act for themselves is by experience. Doubtless there will be many failures and disappointments, but only by falls and bruises can the battle of life be won. The Jesuit Fathers built up a marvellous work amongst the Indians of Paraguay, but when they were expelled by the Government the fabric soon fell to pieces. The reason, I believe, was this: The priests ruled and the people had to obey; they were not taught to think and act for themselves.

The socialistic system of ancient Peru was the cause of its downfall; the people had lost independence, self-reliance, and initiative. We have worked, and are still working, towards making this Chaco people a thinking, independent, and self-reliant Church and nation. Doubtless it would be easier for us to keep them in a state of childhood, implicitly obeying and never questioning the rule of their foster-fathers; and the people, being naturally weak in character, could be easily induced to

remain so. But we are not there for our own comfort and glorification ; it is the present and ultimate benefit of the people that we seek, and this is only to be accomplished by making them learn to depend upon their own efforts instead of by perpetually keeping them in leading-strings.



LENGUA FISH-TRAP.

CHAPTER XXIV

INFANTICIDE AND OTHER EVILS

It is only natural to expect that the beliefs of the Lengua Indians, erroneous as they are, should produce in this primitive people actions corresponding to them. Opinions sincerely held make the man, and as our object was to make them good men, it is evident that we first had to study their moral standpoint. We could only do this by entering fully into their ordinary life, and acquiring by tactful sympathy a knowledge of their thoughts, feelings, and beliefs, which such a people do not readily divulge to the casual stranger. It is not surprising, therefore, that this preliminary work occupied us close upon seven years.

The chief events dealt with in this chapter took place after we had gained this experience, and after we had begun to gain a certain measure of moral influence over the people. The vices and crimes practised by them in their heathen state could doubtless have been overcome had we been in a position to plant a strong governing power among them. An army can quell a revolution, but cannot change the feeling of discontent into one of loyal obedience. In every case where the evil tendencies of man are curbed by physical force alone, reaction immediately sets in the moment that controlling force is removed. It is a truism that education, moral training, and spiritual power can alone mould the character of man satisfactorily and permanently.

I must put it on record that our early successes with this people, and the diminution of the dangers which we had to encounter, were, humanly speaking, due to the policy which we

pursued. Any explorer or trader could have succeeded as well had he adopted similar methods and shown courage and tact. But it was moral power that we aimed to win, in order to benefit the people, and not simply to make our own course easy. Moral influence grows slowly, as it can only advance in proportion as those affected respond to it.

As is usually the case, moral awakening tends to produce a feeling of timidity and shame. Those influenced by it do not at once give way to the new ideas; their old life retains a great attraction, and a conflict ensues between their higher and lower natures. Consciousness of shame induces them to hide, as far as possible, the evil-doing which they are inclined to overcome, but to which they feel they must succumb. We were not surprised, therefore, to discover continual attempts to deceive us, and we still have to encounter such difficulties even among those who show a desire to accept Christianity.

The most prominent evil which we found prevalent among the Lenguas was that of a carefully-planned system of racial suicide, by the practice of infanticide by abortion, and other methods, which, although they show that the Indian has considerable knowledge, are of such a nature that I dare not make them public. Against infanticide proper we took a firm stand, and the humane feelings and natural instincts of the people caused them to respond readily to our appeals. They are urged to this crime by superstitious fears, the custom of centuries, and, paradoxical as it may appear, by feelings of humanity. There is certainly from their point of view, when we remember that they are heathen, a certain justification underlying this crime, on account of their difficult life and their inability to supply sufficient and suitable nourishment for a number of young children.

Their superstitious beliefs impel them to kill all children whose circumstances of birth, according to their religious code, entail the forfeiture of their young lives. We have mentioned before that twins are never allowed to live, as the theory is held that they can never be healthy and strong. The first child, if a female, is invariably put to death, probably because they con-

sider that she will bring ill-luck. They object to a child being of a dark skin at the time of its birth, and also consider certain unpropitious dreams as justifying the destruction of the infant. The Indian mother is fond of her children, and when she consents to the murder of her infant it is not infrequently an agonizing pang to her. But she acquiesces because she realizes the difficulty of maintaining it, and prefers to suffer the lesser pain of losing it at birth than to watch its sufferings as it lingers on for perhaps a year or two, and then dies after she has become warmly attached to it. In the event of her being deserted by her husband, her relatives, knowing what the weight of her burden would be, with no one to maintain her, bring pressure to bear on her to consent to the destruction of the child.

While none feel more keenly than we do the wickedness of this crime, yet, in justice to the Indian, and considering his position and condition of life, we must admit that there are extenuating circumstances.

At the present moment I have in my mind an Indian Christian family of six children, the eldest being about ten years of age. How could this family possibly exist if they had to lead a nomadic and heathen life in such a country as the Chaco? The Christian population is rapidly increasing, and why? Because we have not only led them on to higher ideals, but have enabled them to lead a settled and regular life; the maintenance of a large family under these changed conditions becomes practicable, apart from being a Christian duty.

The first real struggle which we had against infanticide occurred in the year 1895. We had determined to remove our station from Thlagwakhe to Waikthlatingmangyalwa, but, before we finally made this move, we built a few rough huts on the new site. Some few months before our contemplated removal a young Indian had sought to marry one of our village girls. The parents and near relatives strongly opposed this union, but did not succeed in preventing the marriage. She was expecting the birth of a child, and, as we feared the outcome, we extorted a promise from the girl's father that its life would be spared.

Shortly after this the villagers made matters so uncomfortable for the husband that he left the station and went off to the West. The native law is that, if a woman is deserted by her husband, the child is killed as soon as it is born. We heard many reports in the village that the man had deserted the girl of his own accord, and on the strength of these rumours we thought it advisable to call the chief people together to warn them that we should be very angry if the child was destroyed. They assured us that its life would be spared, and we foolishly trusted them.

On the evening of the first day that we occupied the new site the child was born, but as no immediate steps were taken by the people to kill it, we believed that they intended to adhere to their promise, so we retired to rest as usual.

Early next morning, as I was boiling my coffee, a little boy about six years of age came to warm himself at my fire. With childish simplicity he asked me if I had heard the news. I asked him, "What news?" He replied by saying that when the people were assured that we were asleep, they persuaded a visiting witch-doctor from the West to kill the child, shortly after midnight, by knocking it on the back of the neck with his club, and that he had received a sheep and a string of beads for his services. The child went on to say that before the morning star arose, the grandfather of the child had taken the body away and had buried it beneath a bottle-trunk tree in the vicinity. The little fellow evidently noticed a change in my countenance, for he seemed to realize quickly that he ought not to have spoken.

Apparently the people had not been aware that the child had seen or heard anything, or they would certainly have prevented him speaking to me; and as they are very cautious in keeping a secret, and in endeavouring to avoid trouble, no one would ever be likely to hear the subject spoken of again. It is quite clear that he never said anything about his conversation with me, for to the present day the Indians have no idea how the crime was discovered.

Shortly after breakfast we made inquiries about the baby,

and were calmly informed that it had died naturally, and had been buried. We accused them of having killed it, and raised as big a commotion about the matter as possible. We were not in a position to punish those who were implicated, but our object was to impress upon all the gravity of the crime, and our strong disapproval of it. We therefore agreed among ourselves to boycot the grandfather in particular, and decided that we would not employ him nor hold friendly intercourse with him for several months, in order to bring home to him our repugnance at the crime.

The witch-doctor had left early that morning, and the others, evidently feeling ashamed of the part they had played, kept very much to themselves. When we questioned the girl, she cried bitterly, and said that she had not desired the murder. Later in the day I met the grandfather, and on approaching me he offered to shake hands (a custom they had acquired from us), but I looked at his hand, and shrank back, saying it was red. He looked at it himself in surprise, and then, in a confused way, blurted out that he was innocent, saying that it was "Blue-blanket," the witch-doctor, who had done the deed. Greatly to his discomfiture, I reminded him that he had paid "Blue-blanket" to do it, and named the exact payment made. It was easily to be seen from his face that my statement was correct.

They evidently thought that by employing an outsider they would to a great extent avoid our anger, as they could, by shifting the blame on him, shield themselves; so they were very disappointed when they found that their scheme was detected and had failed. We gave the grandfather little peace for the next few months. Sometimes I would meet him, and would casually remark, "Saptaha namuk?" (What says the bottle-trunk tree?), or would pick up a club in his presence, and, looking at it intently for a minute or two, would drop it suddenly, as in disgust. These little reminders had the desired effect, and he learned to know the haunting power of sin, and that the way of transgressors is far from pleasant.

Some years afterwards, Keamapsithyo, our leading Indian, was addressing the people, in our presence, about the final

judgment, and in referring to this and other cases of infanticide, he pictured in his simple Indian fashion the confusion to which such sinners would be brought when they faced the great Judge. He imagined Christ upon the Throne, and the Indians standing before Him. Presently a man was called up, whom he mentioned by name, and the first question asked was, "How many children have you?" The answer was, "Two." "Have you had any more?" asked Christ. "Yes, three more," he replied. "What happened to them?" said Christ. "They died," was the reply. "Have you killed any?" "No," the man replied. Then there was a pause, and presently an angel came forward, leading three children with their necks broken and their heads hanging. Immediately the children ran to the man, and, clasping him round the knees, they cried out, "Tata! Tata!" (Father! Father!) The Judge looked sternly at the man who stood thus convicted, and the latter, full of confusion, hung his head before the Throne, condemned.

Keamapsithyo's address, although we cannot but take exception to some parts of it, was eminently suited to bring vividly before his people the enormity of their sin.

This case of infanticide, although we failed to prevent it, stirred us to make more earnest efforts to bring about the abolition of similar outrages. We spoke strongly and frequently, not only against infanticide proper, but also against its allied evils. As time went on, the effect of our teaching began to show marked results, in spite of the fact that the wizards strongly opposed our efforts to alter customs which they had observed for ages. Only by moral influence could we possibly have succeeded, because we realized that fear of detection and its consequences alone would never bring the people to a higher view of life. We wanted to convince them that what we taught was right, just, and profitable. The old adage, "A man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still," taught us that unless they willed of their own accord to alter their former evil life no other consideration whatever would compel them to do so.

For a long time we were occupied in founding the new village

at Waikthlatingmangyalwa. All previous attempts to establish a permanent settlement had failed, but now the Indians showed a decided inclination to take to a settled life. Regular hours of work were instituted, and a few simple rules introduced, in order to maintain system and order in this new community. A bell rang at fixed hours, summoning the people to work, the children to school, and to the informal services which we presently began to hold; but we interfered as little as possible with the ordinary Indian life, knowing that changes are better wrought slowly than suddenly. We also had to remember that we were dealing with a primitive and roving race, to whom all civilized restrictions were irksome.

Their native feasts we restricted to three days, and we made a compact with the people that there should be no intoxicating drink manufactured or consumed in the vicinity. We also laid gentle restraints upon the prevalence of vice, and required to be notified in the event of approaching death. Our transport service was now in a well-organized condition, and natives accompanying the carts to the River Paraguay were bound to abide by certain rules. There were many who evinced a disposition to accept our Christian teaching, but we showed no favouritism to them over and above their heathen companions.

We were fully conscious of the fact that, although the Indians on the station, and those in the vicinity, adhered to the rules we had laid down, and willingly enough followed the new system introduced, they nevertheless still hankered after their old habits of life. They never openly objected to conform to the new manners, and were evidently unwilling to offend us who were their friends and benefactors. Therefore, as is frequently the Indian way, being torn between a desire to avoid unpleasantness, and yet at the same time to gratify themselves, they cast about for some excuse to leave our neighbourhood. At one time it would be a hunting expedition, at another an invitation to a feast which they could not very well refuse; and once away from our influence, they returned for the time being to their old habits. They were frequently detected, however, in these deceptions, because we ourselves had been infected to some

extent with their erratic customs, and would often, without any warning, set off on a wandering tour. During such itineraries we frequently came unawares upon those who had left us.

On one of these occasions I arrived unexpectedly in the neighbourhood of a village to the West. On entering a cutting in the forest I met two girls who happened to be well known to me. Under ordinary circumstances they would have come forward with great pleasure to greet me, but on this occasion, as soon as they caught sight of me, they ran away in the direction of their village. I expressed my surprise to my two Indian companions, but one of them said, "Be quite still and listen." I obeyed, and presently heard unmistakable sounds of a commotion, and occasionally snatches of a drunken chant. My companions looked at me significantly, but said nothing. We broke into a trot, and were soon at the village. The people, however, having been warned by the girls, had been given time to prepare for our arrival.

We found only a few women and girls, the chief, Mechi, and two men. Although they greeted me in a friendly enough spirit, it was quite clear that I was not too welcome. I asked Mechi where his people were, and he replied that they were away fishing. He wanted to know where I was going, so I told him that I was on my way to Namuk-amyip. As it was then early in the afternoon, he urged me to push on to a village conveniently situated for the night's halt, adding that he hoped that I would stay a few days with him on my return. I informed him, much to his dismay, that I thought I would stay with him until the evening, so that I might see his people when they returned. On hearing this he continued to discuss the advisability of my going on at once, in a manner quite contrary to the usual Indian courtesy and hospitality.

During this conversation I could hear smothered sounds proceeding intermittently from the forest near by. Mechi was unaware that I suspected the origin of these sounds, or that I was purposely delaying my departure in order to substantiate my suspicions. He was visibly becoming more nervous as the time went by, but, regardless of his feelings, we quietly seated

ourselves in his hut, and he was, much against his will, compelled to go and get us some refreshments. While he was away I whispered to one of my Indian companions, who was courting one of the girls at this village, to go at once and find out certain particulars. While we were eating, he returned, and by a sign notified me that he had obtained the desired information. Shortly afterwards, to Mechi's unfeigned delight, we proceeded on our journey, but halted under cover a short distance off. Nor had we long to wait, for soon the signs of revelry broke out unrestrained.

On my return in a week or so, I spent a few days at Mechi's village. When I arrived I inquired after the health of all his followers, and pointedly expressed the hope that none of them were suffering from headache. They did not at first grasp my meaning, but they soon did when I added the remark that on my departure I had heard the fishing-party singing a peculiar chant while returning from the swamp. They looked very confused when once they gleaned how much I knew, and they saw there was no longer room for concealment.

It appears that when the girls notified Mechi of my approach, the women and sober men had hastily removed the drinking-vessels to the wood, and had then carried off the intoxicated men, smothering their drunken cries by covering their mouths with their blankets, and that they had had great difficulty in concealing the real state of matters during my halt at their village.

Drunkenness is perhaps one of the easiest vices which it has been our lot to combat. The people have abandoned this debasing habit with only a slight struggle wherever our influence has been strongly exerted, and the Government of Paraguay has to a certain extent co-operated with us in endeavouring to save the aborigines from this destructive curse.

Our task was not so easy in dealing with cases of sickness, where witchcraft was all-powerful. Force had sometimes to be used, as in the case of an old woman who was reported to be at the point of death. On going to her hut with one of my colleagues we found that she had already been put outside, and that the people were preparing for her burial. We examined her, and

felt that there was a possibility of at least prolonging her life, so we had her removed to our own house, and prepared to give her some suitable nourishment. This, however, she stoutly refused, maintaining that any attempt to revive her was useless, and that she wanted to die. Without more ado we forced her to take the food, and after a few days of careful nursing she was able to move about, and soon recovered. She survived for twelve years, and this is one case among many which serve to show how Indian life is often prematurely cut short from the want of a little care.

In their heathen state it is really impossible to do much for any sick Indians, as they have such a deep-rooted aversion for any methods contrary to those which they themselves have practised for ages. I remember living in a village when nearly all the people were reduced to helplessness from an epidemic of influenza. My colleagues and I procured some sheep and goats, and made nourishing soup for them, but few of them would touch it, as they believe it is bad for sick people. Even when we tried to administer medicine they would not be satisfied unless we also took it; and although we were prepared to do all we could for them, there was a limit to our capacity in this direction. They have now, however, an exaggerated belief in our remedies, and are apt to apply to us for medicine for the slightest ailments. I have on several occasions received credit for curing a headache or other slight disorder by the simple remedy of a concoction of salt and coffee!

It is comparatively easy, when once a beginning has been made, to acquire the Indian language sufficiently to deal with ordinary subjects, but when it comes to imparting religious truth and its abstract ideas, considerable difficulty arises, which is accentuated in talking to a people such as these, who are prone to take everything literally. We found no suitable word in their language by which to express the idea of the Deity, and this caused us much difficulty. Nor could we express sin in its concrete form, but had to use a roundabout phrase, implying evil thought, evil words, and evil actions. Their ideas of time were also very crude, and when referring to persons in Old

Testament history, such as Abraham, we were frequently asked if he was a tribesman of ours, and if we had met him.

A peculiarity of their language is that when you do not speak from your own knowledge—that is, in reported speech—you have continually to use phrases such as: "I have heard just now"; "I have heard recently"; "I heard a long time ago"; "It was said that a long time ago"; and "It is said that So-and-so said a long time ago." So much are these and like expressions worked into the structure of their language, that they resent any interference with their rules of speech, of which they are very proud.

They have also one form of speech when addressing men and another when speaking to women, and in preaching to a mixed audience the Indians considered it necessary that we should address a statement first to the men and then to the women. So cumbersome and time-wasting were these peculiarities that, a sermon which need only have taken half an hour, occupied an hour, and we found it advisable, at a later date, to ignore their prejudices somewhat, and to abbreviate these tedious and complex phrases.

We have to be very careful in teaching an Indian, since he accepts everything literally. On one occasion I was exhibiting some lantern slides, one of which happened to be a group of the Twelve Apostles, and my audience at once insisted on being told which was which. As it was impossible to explain to them that this was only an imaginary group, I had to venture to name them individually. Unfortunately, at a later date, a colleague altered the order of their names, and the natives concluded that he was not by any means acquainted with his subject.

They are keen observers of nature, and on seeing a picture of an angel, they evidently puzzled over it for a long time, and eventually remarked that they could not understand how he could use his wings, since they sprang from the backbone, instead of from the shoulder. It was a hard task to make it clear that angelic wings were only symbolical.

After two years of teaching in the huts and in the open, we urged the people to assist us in erecting a suitable building in

which they could meet for instruction, as the first step to a church; and we impressed upon them that they must behave in an orderly and respectful manner. To their credit, be it said, we found little difficulty, as they are by nature a reverent people. But on one occasion an elderly man, now a sincere Christian, evidently finding the discourse long and tedious, thought that there would be no harm in having a smoke, and he accordingly lighted his pipe. One of the more advanced natives went to inform him that such a proceeding was most unseemly. He at once extinguished his pipe, and sat listening for a little while. Then, apparently feeling sleepy, he, quite in the Indian way, covered his head with his blanket, and presumably composed himself for a nap. Presently, what was my surprise to see smoke rising through his blanket! He was again cautioned, but simply replied, "I did not think the Spirit would see me," affording another instance of how an Indian tries to get his own way, without giving offence.

As the station Indians came into constant contact with us, they gradually acquired a few of our expressions, without making any attempt to learn our language. They frequently visited us in our huts when we were busy, and kept on asking us many questions. When we had borne with them for a time, we would gently try to get rid of them by shaking hands, moving towards the door, and politely wishing them "Good-night," irrespective of the time of day. The Indian soon realized that this was equivalent to saying: "I have finished talking to you; you may go." We had taught them to say "Amen" at the close of a prayer, and with the exception of the old Indian just referred to, they all used this word; but he, with a fine conceit of his wider knowledge, persisted for a long time in saying at the end of his prayer "Good-night" instead of "Amen."

CHAPTER XXV

A MURDEROUS ATTACK

As the years passed by, and our influence over the Indians grew in proportion to the gradual increase in the Mission staff, our work became sufficiently consolidated to enable me in 1896 to leave on my first furlough to England. But before my departure from the Chaco I had determined, after careful preliminary preparations, to establish a Mission in the West-south-west Chaco, on the borders of the Lengua, Suhin, and Toothli tribes. The people of this district, who had been informed of our new move in their direction, seemed pleased at the prospect, but at the same time doubtful whether we should fulfil our promise to them. I had, however, already cut a rough cart-track to their country, and had taken a bullock-cart half-way to Mechi's village, and built a hut there to serve as a half-way house.

After serious consideration, I decided to authorize an Indian named Poit to carry out some preparatory movements on the frontier during my absence in England. He was at that time our most hopeful and capable adherent, and it was for this reason that I chose him. I gave him seventeen head of cattle and other goods for barter, with definite instructions that he was to establish himself and his clan at a certain place, make a garden, barter the goods for sheep and goats, and the cattle also as opportunity offered. He was to do what he could to persuade the people to gather round us as soon as we could send out men to begin the work, and to impress upon them the conditions of our residence among them. First, that no native beer should be brewed or consumed on the station. Secondly,

that feasts must not continue longer than three days. Thirdly, that no infanticide would be allowed. Fourthly, that the people must work when called upon. Fifthly, that they must be prepared to carry mails to the River Paraguay, and bring out goods when required. Sixthly, that they must keep the cart-track clear, and that the peace which had already been established between the three tribes must be maintained.

When we first contemplated the foundation of a new station at Waikthlatingmangyalwa, and sub-stations in other parts, we made similar compacts with the natives. Up to this time we had every reason to be satisfied with the way in which they kept their word. From the year 1893 to the present day no Indian has attempted to make or traffic in intoxicating liquor on our stations; and animals, such as sheep, goats, cattle, and horses, left in their charge had always up to this time been scrupulously tended. When we first introduced cattle among them (they had had cattle previously, but from one cause and another had practically lost all), we stipulated that they should not kill any, even when the animals belonged to themselves, without our permission. This was in order that the cattle might have every opportunity to multiply, until the herds were sufficiently large to admit of butchering for consumption.

Only on two occasions was this rule broken, and, strange to say, on both with tragic results to the men implicated. The first man, while cleaning his gun after killing the animal, somehow or other ignited his powder-flask, with the result that he was severely scorched. Not until this incident had been almost forgotten, was another Indian found bold enough to attempt to break the rule. His act was followed by more disastrous consequences. His gun burst and he lost the greater portion of one hand. These two cases had such an effect upon the Indians, that when one of the staff during my absence ordered a native to kill one of the Mission cattle for food, he point-blank refused until he was assured that I had actually given instructions to that effect.

We had suffered very little from ordinary stealing, and only one case of infanticide had been committed actually on our

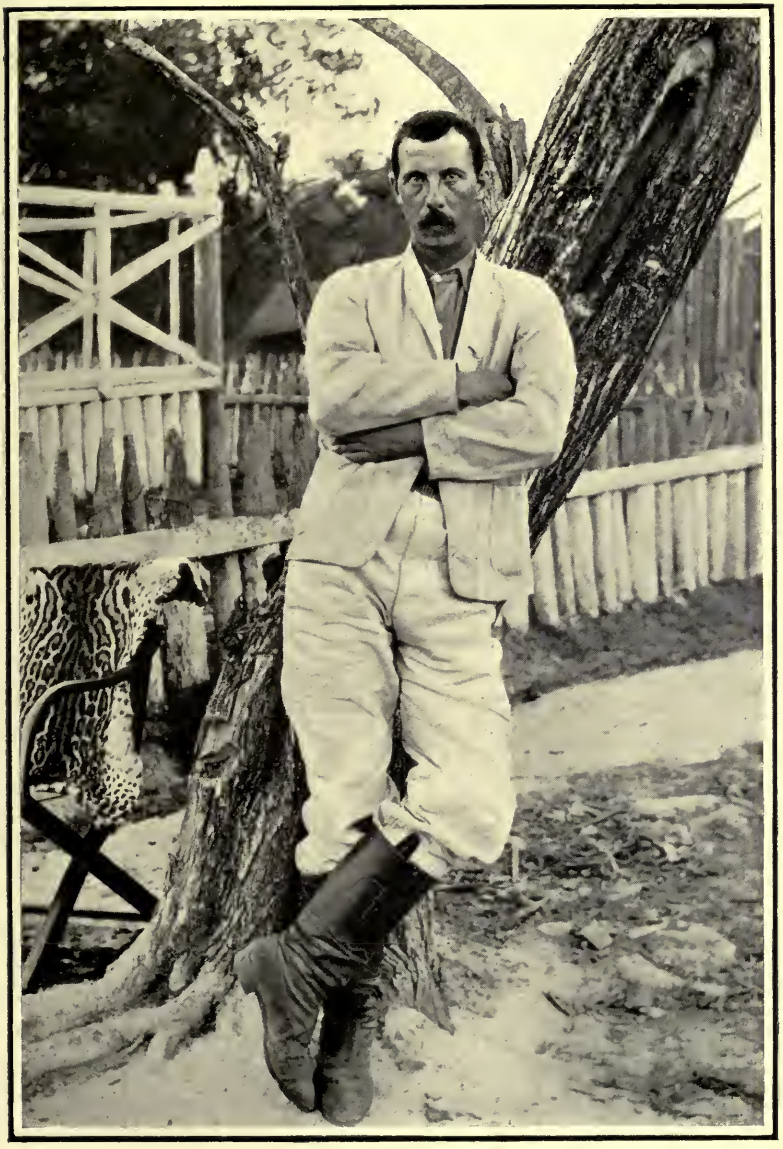
station. When the Indians desired to perpetrate this crime, they removed to some distance off in order to keep the fact secret.

Very little difficulty had been experienced in obtaining workmen when required; in fact, we had gained such an ascendancy over the people that we felt quite justified in making this new venture with Poit.

Several men who had been on the staff had left the Mission, owing to breakdowns in health and other causes, but I was the first who had left the field for any length of time with the intention of returning to it. The Indians did not grasp the idea of a man going on furlough, and when I left for England, many of them doubted whether I should ever come back. If they expected me at all, they guessed it would be in the course of two or three months, having no idea of the distance I had to travel.

Poit, as the summer passed by, was evidently convinced that I had gone for good. To the Indian, the Mission party merely comprised a few men related to each other—cousins, brothers, uncles, and so on, and it seemed reasonable that I should be the Chief, as I had been the first to come among them. They had no idea of our being the representatives of a greater company in another land, and that the cattle and goods which I had handed over to Poit were really the property of the Mission and not my own. Poit, therefore, concluding that I should not return, considered himself the owner of the property I had left. It is true that I had assured him of my ultimate return, with a warning that he would certainly get into trouble if he acted disloyally, but as everything from the Indian aspect pointed the other way, he took the risk, and appropriated the property left in his charge for his own purposes.

In their autumn when I returned, Poit was naturally alarmed, and at once took steps to keep me in ignorance of what he had done, and as far as possible to make good what was short. The staff, having been reinforced by two men whom I brought out from England, set to work vigorously to enlarge the Mission's sphere. As the horse disease had killed off our horses, and it was



W. Barbrooke Grubb

The photograph was taken shortly after Poit's attempt to murder him

dangerous to import more until the possibility of contagion had passed, we had to make our journeys on foot. During the last eight months of the year following upon my return, I had travelled on foot over one thousand seven hundred miles under very trying conditions, and by the middle of December I was feeling rather exhausted. Privations, fatigue, and exposure had begun to tell upon me.

During the previous few months we had been somewhat annoyed by thefts taking place on the station. While I was absent on one journey to the River Paraguay, twenty-eight dollars were stolen from the store. This money was eventually recovered, but in such a roundabout way, that we could not discover the thief. Reports also reached me that Poit had killed some of the cows and sheep left in his charge. A gun was also stolen about this time from a cart which was bringing in goods belonging to Professor Graham Kerr, of Glasgow University, who was then engaged in scientific research on our station. The thief was bound to know that the weapon belonged to him, as eventually the gun was found by an Indian hidden near a forest. The circumstances were such as to show that the discovery had been prearranged, and many incidents conspired to attach suspicion to Poit.

About the beginning of December some Toothli arrived, and asked when we intended to begin work among their people. The season was intensely hot and I was hardly fit for another journey, but the need was so pressing that it was forced upon me. It was necessary to sift thoroughly the whole question of Poit's supposed dishonesty, and at the same time to reassure the people in the south-west that we fully intended to carry out our promise to them. The Mission Indians were unsettled and restless, and matters had to be cleared up without delay. Any vacillation or weakness on our part at this crisis might have so affected the Indians that graver difficulties would certainly have arisen.

I accordingly prepared, on December 13, to leave for the west on foot, with six Indians, of whom Poit was one.

One or two coincidences happened which did not strike me at

the time, but which became rather curious in the light of later events. Several Indians, for instance, strongly urged me not to go, owing to the length of the road, the scarcity of water, the great heat, and my exhausted condition. One woman came forward just before I left, and in a sad tone told me that if I went I would "leave my bones whitening on the road." I only laughed at her and told her I was strong. One of my companions, who overheard this, called out jokingly as I went away, "Remember, if you don't come back, I am to have this thing," and another shouted, "I am to have that."

Poit, as usual, acted as headman, and gave the orders about camping and the track to be followed. As was my custom, we travelled chiefly at night in order to avoid the hot sun.

All went well till I passed Mechi's village. I had gone ahead with Poit, making for a suitable camping-place for the midday halt. I frequently noticed that my Indians, who were carrying all my provisions and kit, were not in sight, but I did not pay much attention to this, thinking that they had lagged behind gathering wild fruit. I therefore rested beneath a tree, and sent Poit back to hurry them up.

A long time elapsed before he returned alone, bringing with him my kettle, tea, biscuits, net, and a few other goods. He told me that one of the men had run a long thorn into his foot, and consequently was unable to walk. He added that the others were trying to extract it, and that they hoped to overtake me by the evening, so he had brought with him sufficient food for that day. I afterwards learned that he had told them I had sent him back with strict orders that they were to return to the village we had left that morning, and there to await my return, which might not be for some weeks. I also found out later, that, in addition to the kit which he brought me, he took from them some bandages and medicines which I carried for emergencies. These he hid in a clump of bushes at the roadside, and they were afterwards found and restored to me, but long after I returned to the Mission station. It appears that he instructed them to take care of the remainder of my provisions and kit against my return. The Indians admitted afterwards that they were very

much surprised at this order, but that, as they believed Poit to be telling the truth, they obeyed.

We rested that midday, and as the Indian carriers had not come up with us, we advanced towards our camping-place for the night. It was on this night that I noticed for the first time that Poit seemed preoccupied and strange in his manner, and not his usual self. Still, I paid no particular attention to this, as the Indians are subject to fits of *tristezza*, and concluded that probably he had had some altercation with the village folk, or that he was tired and liverish.

As my carriers did not arrive that night, I was inclined to wait for them in the morning, but Poit suggested that they had probably concluded we had travelled as far as the village of Makthlatimes, and that they had therefore taken the south track, expecting to meet us there. This seemed likely, so we set out for this village, and arrived there about midday, only to find that there was no sign or even word of our porters.

Poit expressed great surprise and indignation at this, and, after talking over the whole matter with me, agreed that there could be no reason why they should not have caught up with us, for, even supposing they had taken back the man with the wounded foot to Paisiamyalwa, yet they could have made good the delay, as we had been travelling very slowly. He said, however, that on our journey out, and also at Paisiamyalwa, he had just caught a few words expressing disapproval of my trip to the Toothli country. The Lenguas were not on the best of terms with the Toothli at that time, and he suggested that it was just possible that the Indians anticipated trouble for me and themselves, and that they had perhaps decided to give me the slip, fearing that if anything happened to me, they would be held responsible by the English. I agreed with him that this was possible. I still had no suspicions that he was playing me false, not giving him credit for such astuteness and power of invention; in fact, in my disappointment at the conduct of my carriers, I felt all the more pleased with Poit for sticking so closely to me. I was determined not to be defeated in my plans by their desertion, although the loss of trained men and my

valuables was a serious one. I therefore ordered Poit to recruit six men from this village, which was one of his own clan, and to procure a sufficient supply of sweet potatoes, mandioca, and any other provisions he could get together, to enable me to pursue my journey.

The only clothes I had were those which I stood up in—a thin cotton shirt and cotton trousers, a hat, no socks, and only a pair of rather worn *alpargatas* (canvas slippers with rope soles). Considering the nature of the country I had to travel through, it was highly probable that these poor garments would be worn out in the course of two or three weeks, but, should the worst come to the worst, I knew I could fall back on an Indian blanket, to which I had often had recourse before.

The six men and provisions were procured, and that night we pushed on to a village where Poit's family lived. He had by this time recovered his good spirits, and I received a hearty welcome at his village. I inquired here into the cattle question and other matters, not only from Poit, but (without his overhearing me) from other people of the village, receiving prompt and frank replies to my questions. The replies seemed at the time to be entirely reassuring, but as they eventually proved to be false, they became conclusive evidence that all Poit's people were in league with him. Knowing the Indian character somewhat, I took the precaution of telling them that on the next day they must send out their men and collect all the cattle, that I might convince myself of the truth of their statements with my own eyes. They complied with my wish, and long before dawn sent out men in all directions.

It must be understood that these people do not use milk in their native state, and that they have no such thing as fenced paddocks. The cattle are allowed to roam where they please, and are only occasionally rounded up. Even now, on our own stations, it is not unusual for cattle to stray thirty or forty miles away, especially in time of drought. The natives are perfectly honest in the matter of live-stock, and any villagers meeting with stray cattle, will round them up with their own stock. I was not therefore altogether surprised when, on the

MECHI

A Lengua Chief of a rather truculent type (see page 102).

POIT

A highly intellectual Indian who attempted the life of the author (see page 253). He met with a terrible end at the hands of his fellow-tribesmen.

return of the men, they informed me that they had only brought up about two-thirds of the number, but that they had heard from natives they had met that the others had mixed with the cattle of villages too far distant for them to visit. Not caring to waste time, I ordered them to have all the cattle collected and kept near the village by my return in a few weeks' time, which they readily agreed to do. I afterwards discovered that they had lied to me, and that the missing cattle were at the very time in the village, but transformed into men, women, and children; in other words, they had eaten them.

Next day I proceeded on my journey, and on Saturday night camped at the last frontier Lengua village. Sunday was pleasantly spent with the people, and Poit was extremely gracious and kind. Nothing could have been pleasanter. On Sunday night I had an attack of malaria, and felt rather weak on Monday morning. A heavy dew had fallen, and as the route lay for a considerable way through tall and soaking wet grass, Poit, together with many of the people, urged me to delay my departure until the sun had risen sufficiently to dry the grass.

It was midsummer, and I had intended starting in spite of the fever when the morning star arose—that is, about 3.30 a.m. —in order to cover the twenty miles to the next village before the sun became too oppressive. Feeling rather ill, however, I yielded to the entreaty of the natives, and consented to defer my setting out till about 6.30 a.m., which gave the sun an hour and a quarter to absorb the dew. When it is remembered that the heat at that period of the year averages 106° F. in the shade, its drying power can be readily realized.

Poit recommended me to send the men on ahead with my kit, in order to prepare the Toothli for my arrival. He said he knew a short cut through the forest, and that in every way it would be better for me to act as he suggested. I accordingly sent them on in advance. He made my breakfast, and was very solicitous as to my health. While I was eating, he said that he thought it advisable to borrow some better weapons from his friends at the village. He was only armed with wooden-pointed barbed arrows and a club, and he wished to borrow iron-headed

arrows instead, as jaguars had been reported in the neighbourhood, and as I was unarmed he would be better equipped in case of accidents. He accordingly went to the village, and returned with the necessary iron-headed arrows. He then borrowed from me a small triangular file, and sat down beside me conversing and sharpening the blades, and now and then waited on me with tea. The scraping so irritated me in my malarial condition that I ordered him to complete the operation at a distance. I little thought at the time that his desire to put a keen edge on the blades was on my own special account.

Eventually we proceeded on our journey. After a time we left the beaten track, and he confessed that he was uncertain about the best course to take. We crossed the River Monte Lindo four times, as it winds very much in this locality; but it was fortunately rather low at the time, so only once had we to swim a few strokes.

I became very angry with him for having asserted that he knew a good track, and then landing me in this difficulty in my weak condition. He appeared very sorry. Just before crossing the river for the fourth time we encountered the fresh spoor of a jaguar, which must have passed early that morning. A few minutes after this we saw an Indian out hunting on the opposite bank of the river, and Poit enlarged to him upon the jaguar tracks we had just passed. The man—an elderly one—appeared by no means too well pleased at the news, and signified his intention of moving off to the open country, evidently not caring to risk an encounter.

Presently we entered the forest, but soon came to a dead stop. The bush was seemingly impenetrable. Poit left me, and said he would reconnoitre. After a while I heard just ahead of me, at a distance of apparently only some twenty-five yards, the crackling of branches, such as would be caused by the progress of a man or animal. I immediately thought of the jaguar, and halloed for Poit, at the same time shouting to scare the beast if such it should be. Shortly afterwards I saw Poit peering through the trees, with a strange look on his face as of excitement and fear combined. I particularly remarked this, as

it was a look I had never before seen on an Indian's face. I did not think much of it, however, beyond imagining that probably he, too, was scared at the prospect of seeing a jaguar.

I asked him how he managed to get round there, and he replied, "With difficulty"; but that from where he was the way was fairly clear, and that I should try and work through to him from where I was. He presently said: "You are not able to do it. Wait, and I will join you." In a few minutes he was by my side. We were in a very small open space, not larger than a moderate-sized room, with dense undergrowth all around, and the river close behind us. I ordered him to go ahead and break a way through. He replied: "Wait a minute; I have forgotten the kettle;" and went off to fetch it, telling me to open a passage as much as I could to save time. I did not realize that when I saw him ahead of me he had actually been manœuvring to get a fair shot at me, and that the strange expression I had seen on his face was the result of acute tension and fear of discovery.

I was bending down, trying to cleave a way, when suddenly I felt a sharp blow in my back, just below the right shoulder-blade, close to the spine. I rose up and saw Poit, about four or five paces off, with a look of horror on his face. My first thought was of the jaguar—that he had shot at it, and in his excitement hit me instead. I told him to come to my assistance, but he cried out: "O Mr. Grubb! O Mr. Grubb!" (a most unusual expression, the Indians always addressing me by my Indian name, Yiphenabanyetik). Then with a sharp cry of pain and terror, "Ak-kai! Ak-kai!" he rushed off towards the river, and was lost to sight.

INDIAN CLAY PIPE-BOWL.

CHAPTER XXVI

IN DANGER OF BURIAL ALIVE

It is well known that in times of danger the brain works with remarkable rapidity and clearness. It was so with me on this occasion. I was perfectly calm and clear-headed, and Poit's real intent, with the whole series of his villainous devices and inventions, passed vividly through my mind. I felt no pain, which was quite natural, for a sudden shock such as this was tends to deaden the nerves.

Blood was spouting from my back, and soon from my mouth too. The iron arrow-head (seven inches long by one inch wide) had penetrated so far that I could only get three of my fingers on the protruding part of the blade, the shaft (a cane one) being completely shivered. I realized in an instant the probability that I should swoon, and so made for the river in order to refresh myself by plunging into the water. Before doing so, however, I took out my watch—one borrowed from a colleague, Richard Hunt—and laid it on the bank.

The water revived me somewhat, and I then proceeded to extract the arrow. This caused me great difficulty owing to its awkward position, and having to work it backwards and forwards, up and down, in order to free it from its wedged position in the ribs. The arrow-head had entered perpendicularly and in an oblique direction, and thus had met with the resistance of the ribs. Had it entered horizontally, with no such obstacle, the injury to the lungs would have been far more serious. On extracting it, I found that the point was bent and twisted, which partly accounted for the difficulty I had in pulling it out.

I then returned to the forest, picked up the watch, my kettle,

and the few things left me by Poit, and entered the water, walking along the river-edge in order to hide my tracks, in case Poit, on discovering that he had not killed me outright, should return to complete his work. My object was to endeavour to strike the track we had followed that morning, and I succeeded in crossing the river three times, but at the fourth crossing I nearly sank in mid-stream. I was exhausted from the exertion of this and my previous attempts, and had grown so weak from the loss of so much blood, that I was forced to climb the opposite bank on all-fours; but before leaving the river I, for the second time, wrung out the blood from my shirt.

Bleeding at the mouth still continued at intervals, and I felt convinced, from what little knowledge I possessed, that I could not live much longer than an hour, if as long. My great desire, therefore, was, if possible, to reach the beaten track before I died, so that some passing Indian might discover my body, and that the fact and manner of my death might through him reach my friends. I was in every way desirous of saving my companions and relatives as much anxiety as possible as to my actual fate, for otherwise they might have surmised that I had been taken captive, as it was well known that Indians had kept foreigners prisoners for years.

I succeeded in reaching the path I was looking for, and lay down under a spreading *algaroba* tree to die, first placing the arrow beside me to tell the tale. I had not been in this position more than a few minutes, when, to my joy, I saw an Indian coming towards me. He was horrified to find me in such a condition; but I was only able to say that Poit had shot me, being too weak to give him any details.

He at once raised me, and, telling me I was close to his village, he assisted me towards it with tender care.

On my arrival, astonishment and horror fell upon the village. They laid me down in one of their huts, and gave me, when I asked for it, a drink of water. After resting a time I felt very weak and shaken, being overspent with the nervous strain.

The touch of the blood-soaked shirt and trousers, and still more the sight of them, revolted me, so I told a woman to take

off my shirt and wash it, for it was saturated and clotted with blood. She tenderly removed the shirt, and proceeded to rinse it in a half-gourd. I began to feel dizzy, and my sight grew dim. I could distinguish nothing but blurred forms, and I feared I was about to swoon. I again asked for water, and a gourd was placed near me; but it happened that the one in which my shirt had been washed was also close by. Being dazed, I had not been able to follow all that had happened, but managed to seize a gourd, and had already drunk some mouthfuls when a woman sprang forward and took it from me. I was afterwards informed by them that I had actually been drinking the blood washed from my shirt.

Towards evening I began to suffer great pain, and was so weak that I could not move without help. Just before sunset the people came frequently to look at me, and I could sometimes catch words of reference to my approaching death. This terrified me—not the fear of death itself (which I felt sure could not be very far distant, even if not from the actual wound itself, at least from the complications which I felt would inevitably ensue), but because of my knowledge of the barbarous burial customs practised by these people in accordance with their religious tenets.

That night was to me a night of horror and discomfort, and, to add to my pain, a roving goat landed squarely upon my chest. Having no net, I also suffered much from the swarms of mosquitos, but not so much as I should have under ordinary circumstances, owing to the dulled state of my nerves.

Next morning (Tuesday, December 21) I was still alive, but barely. The people were very kind to me, doing all they could to tempt me with food, of which I managed to take a little. Unfortunately I could understand all that the people said, for my brain was clearer, although to talk to them was too great an effort.

The news of the attempt on my life was soon sent round the country, and people came in from the neighbouring villages to see me, among others some of the Toothli, and with them the men who had been sent on ahead on the previous morning.

They brought back my mosquito-net, some tea and sugar, and a few biscuits, thus placing me in a better position than on the previous day and night.

I now became very anxious to send news of my plight to the Mission station at Waikthlatingmangyalwa, which I knew would bring me prompt assistance. I therefore asked for a messenger to carry the news to the next village, and the man who found me under the tree, Wischi-apkyitkya-aptawa by name, volunteered to go, but I had no guarantee that he would take the message. There was some doubt in my mind as to the attitude of the people generally. Naturally I did not know them as well then as I do now, but I was sufficiently acquainted with their character to be aware that in some ways they were remarkably deep and subtle, especially in the light of recent events. Their solicitude for me might, therefore, I thought, be not unmingled with other motives. But the main question was, Would they risk carrying the news, and thus bringing their countryman into trouble? However, it was just as well to try the experiment of getting news through. As it afterwards turned out, the natives were sincere in their kindness to me, and genuinely indignant with their countryman; so the message was hurried forward by relays from village to village, and soon reached the station.

After sending off Wischi-apkyitkya-aptawa with the news, I received the various visitors who had come in to see me, as far as my weak condition would permit. They were all very kind and sympathetic, and avowed their great resentment against Poit. They asserted that he would certainly be killed; but this, of course, I did not believe, regarding it only as an expression of courtesy on their part.

On leaving me, they all, without exception, imparted the pleasing information that I could not possibly live. Their experience in warfare, they told me, was that they never knew a man so injured to survive. They informed me, however, that they would treat me with the greatest possible consideration, and that they had selected an exceptionally good site for my last resting-place under a shady tree, where I should not be

annoyed by the rays either of the moon or of the sun. They knew my strong objection to sleeping in the moonlight, and said that they therefore hoped that when dead I would bear them no ill-will. They had always been friends, had always obeyed me, and they trusted I would not forget it. They concluded by saying: "Friend, the sun is about to set; make yourself strong, and do not die till to-morrow."

Just as the shades of night began to gather, the women and even some of the bigger children kept coming over to me, and saying: "It's getting dark—are you strong? Make yourself strong. Don't die to-night; we are sleeping here. Wait until to-morrow to die."

Their anxiety about my death was to a great extent due to fear lest I should die in the night, which would fill them with terror of my spirit. Knowing, therefore, that their custom was to bury a person alive before the sun set if there was any great likelihood of his death occurring in the night, I felt not only particularly uncomfortable, but was compelled, much against my inclination, to make a supreme effort to prove to them as forcibly as possible, that I had still a very considerable amount of life left in me. I invariably kept assuring them that I had no intention whatever of dying that night, and although I doubted my assertion, I gave them to understand that it would be from no lack of effort on my part. But although they partly accepted the first statement, they shook their heads and looked incredulous at the last, as much as to say, "You might possibly live through the night, but you certainly can't last long." I frequently overheard snatches of conversation during the day and night, which were hardly calculated to cheer or encourage a dying man.

I firmly believe that it was only by a constant effort of will, sustained by the power of God, that I was enabled at times to resist swooning. The Indian regards swooning and dying as more or less identical, and the word for both is the same, so that had I swooned for even a comparatively short space of time, they undoubtedly would have had no hesitation at all in burying me; in fact, I was aware from snatches of conversation I had

overheard that they had already made most of the necessary preparations for the ceremony.

They were kind enough this night to put up my mosquito-net, and to erect a rude fence of boughs round me to keep off the dogs and goats. Within the net, which was of thickish calico, I could not be seen, and they themselves had that night retired to the farther end of the village, evidently anticipating that my death was imminent, and not wishing to encounter my spirit. This enabled me to have a much better night's rest, but before they left me I was again questioned about my strength, of which, in spite of my stout assurances, they again evidently had misgivings. However, I was left in peace the whole of that night.

On the morrow I felt a little stronger, and, as may be imagined, I was very anxious to work my way eastwards towards the station. If I could once cover seventy miles of country, I should then be within the actual sphere of the Mission's influence, and could feel comparatively safe. Accordingly, with the assistance of the natives, although they remonstrated with me, I determined to make an effort to travel, however slowly. But I was so weak that it only ended in my staggering and falling when left to myself. I was therefore compelled for the time to give up the attempt.

On regaining my shelter, the people kindly made a rest for my back by rigging up some sticks, thus enabling me to sit up. Towards midday, with the help of the Indians, I attempted to start eastward, and contrived this time to make some progress.

After stumbling along for two miles, I met Wischi-apkyitkya-aptawa returning from delivering my message at the next village. He was painted in mourning, for the report had reached the place that I was dead. He told me the news of Poit's movements, that, after leaving me for dead, he had determined to go straight to the Mission station to carry the report of my death to my companions, and that he had reached a village about half-way there, intending to go on as soon as he had rested awhile. The story Poit concocted was that we had

met a jaguar in the wood, which had attacked me, and that he, shooting at it in my defence, had missed his mark and struck me instead. Strange to say, this story tallied almost exactly with the impression that flashed across my mind when I was shot. He further told me that on hearing Poit's account of my death, two of the Indians at this half-way village signified their intention of leaving at once with the news, as he was worn out.

But just as they were starting, a man was seen approaching with marks of mourning on his body. He turned out to be the relay messenger sent on from the next village by Wischi-apkyitkya-aptawa. Poit no sooner saw his signs of mourning and warlike attitude than it instantly dawned upon him that someone had discovered my body and realized that there had been foul play. They could not, of course, have known even then that Poit had wilfully shot me, but his guilty conscience evidently affected him so much that without a word he ran off at full speed to the forest, and was not again seen for about a fortnight.

The man bearing my message explained to the people the real state of affairs, and they in turn sent on a message to Waikth-latingmangyalwa, with the true account instead of Poit's fabricated story.

After telling me all this news, Wischi-apkyitkya-aptawa drew six arrows from his belt, and flourishing them above his head, solemnly declared that he would put every one of them through Poit's body if he ever found him, and then broke down crying.

When he saw the slow progress I was making, he offered to carry me on his back, but this was not practicable. He, however, turned back with me and the two men who were helping me along.

After much difficulty, and suffering great pain, I arrived at Poit's village, having travelled for three and a half hours. They received me very kindly, and at once killed a sheep, and made me some strong broth of it. I was in much need of some strengthening nourishment, and it revived me greatly. The old women displayed great grief at my pitiable condition, while the

men stood by sadly sympathizing. I overheard the Chief's wife saying in a solemn tone to her companions, "Just look at him now, and only a few days ago he came in here so strong and cheerful, and singing our songs! And," she added, "he said to me when he came in, 'Auntie, have you any potatoes?' And now look at him all covered with blood and about to die!" Then some of them burst out crying. I stayed here only to drink the soup, and in the afternoon reached another village, where I spent the night. The wound occasionally broke out bleeding slightly, and from time to time small quantities of blood came from my mouth, owing, no doubt, to the exertion and the jars experienced when I stumbled.

The next day fair progress was made with the same help. About midday the Indians took me to the shade of a small wood in an open plain, and told me they must leave me for a while and go off hunting. I was too exhausted to move about much by myself, so I settled down to sleep. The insects were an intense worry, but I did manage to sleep a little, how long I cannot exactly say. I awoke with a start, and distinctly heard someone moving on the outskirts of the wood on the far side. I knew it was a man from certain peculiar noises other than the tread, and my suspicions were at once aroused, for, in spite of the kindness of the people, I still felt very distrustful of them, and would have tried to evade them and endeavour to find my own way eastward had I felt equal to the task.

It now flashed across my mind that either these men had left me on purpose to notify Poit, who might even then be lurking near in order to complete his foul deed, and that the story of Wischi-apkyitkya-aptawa was false, or that they themselves intended to kill me while slumbering alone in the open country and away from their villages. By so doing they would destroy any possible clue, and prevent any revenge being taken by my companions, who might call in the aid of the foreigner. I knew they were afraid of vengeance being wreaked upon them by the Paraguayan soldiery, for they had frequently asked me if it was my intention to hand them over to the authorities. They were barely reassured by my saying that such would never be the

case, for they still thought that although the vengeance might not come through any act of mine, yet my companions would insist upon it. It is a strange coincidence that at one and the same time the Indians feared vengeance from the foreigners and the missionaries feared an attack from the Indians—in fact, so imminent did this seem that, as I afterwards learnt, my colleagues had instructed the station Indians to intercept any news or signs of a rising.

This digression is necessary in order to show the reader what extreme tension there was on both sides at the time, and to account for my suspicions of further foul play, for knowing to some extent the thoughts that were running in the Indians' minds, I felt convinced that the stealthy sounds I had heard near me as I lay in the wood boded no good. I at once resolved, therefore, to try and escape, and succeeded in getting clear of the wood. I managed to travel on for part of the afternoon without any help, frequently and purposely diverging from the beaten track.

In course of time, however, the Indians overtook me, and were as much upset as I was. They told me that on returning to the wood, they were filled with alarm at not finding me there, and immediately spread out in order to track me. They brought with them some honey, which they said was to be reserved entirely for my use. I was so touched by this kindness and thoughtfulness that I could not bring myself to confess my recent suspicions of them, and I realized more fully than before that without their aid and kind tendance I could never have got thus far.

I was in such a state that nearly all food was repulsive to me, and I subsisted chiefly on the *algaroba* bean. The few biscuits I had saved, and which I could have enjoyed, had been taken from me by a kindly-disposed Toothli at the first village, who assured me quite frankly that, as I certainly could not live, and therefore would not require them, he would very much like to take the remaining three to his children, which he forthwith did. There was no real unkindness in this, for he was firmly convinced that I would never need another biscuit, and as he

and others had made a special visit to me from their country, he thought he might just as well take them as leave them to be eaten by the Lenguas. The honey, therefore, was most welcome. It had healing as well as nutritive properties, and the natives assured me that it would heal the wound from the inside. Fortunately for me, the wound, according to the Indians, showed no signs of suppurating.

That night we slept in the open country. In the morning (Friday), instead of feeling stronger, I was much weaker, but nevertheless made a very early start. The Indians, however, soon realized that I could not go much farther in my weak condition, so one of them went on ahead to the nearest village to secure a horse. I could have obtained a horse before, but I felt unable to ride, as the Indians use no saddles, and the jarring would have been too great. Before long he returned with one, and there was no other help for it but to mount. They tenderly placed me on its back, but had to hold me on. In a short time we arrived at the village. There I met one of Poit's aunts, and although all the people received me graciously, she insisted on sitting by me, and by continually fanning gave me relief from the insects and the heat.

Not long after my arrival I was glad to see two of the Mission party riding towards me with two Indians, Keamapsithyo and his brother Manuel. On the arrival of this party I seemed to break down altogether. The nervous strain was relaxed, and physical weakness had its way. They told me that they had gone right on to Poit's village, but finding there that they had missed me, had ridden back, and had very nearly lost me a second time. The cause of this was that when I went off on my own account, I had diverged to the south from the main track.

We rested all that day, and remained the night. My wound was dressed, and they had brought with them suitable food, restoratives and medicine. Keamapsithyo slept with me under my net that night in order to be at hand to attend to me, and he behaved as well as the best trained nurse could have done. When I required to turn, he gently assisted me; when I wished to cough, he tenderly raised me; he brought me water and

restoratives when wanted, and fanned me most of the night because of the heat.

The next day, mounting me on a horse they had specially selected for the purpose, and with a suitable saddle, they proceeded towards Mechi's village (Paisiamyalwa), but I was so weak that I had to be held on and plied constantly with stimulants. Frequently they had to take me off and lay me on the ground. I had collapsed so much that it was only by the help of brandy and strong ammonia that they managed to get me along, and just before arriving at Mechi's I broke out crying and sobbing through sheer weakness.

On my arrival the people, although they were under direct Mission influence, showed, strange to say, a remarkably changed attitude. The welcome was not so effusive, nor did they crowd round as before. They appeared shy and frightened, although not so much as they afterwards became. The fact of the matter was the people had had time to think, and reports had been circulated and had reached them that I had actually died, but that in some mysterious way I had been resuscitated. This was a possibility of which they had no precedent, and could only be accounted for in their minds from the fact that I belonged to a class to which they attributed abnormal powers, and with whom some at least associated the Imlah tradition previously alluded to. This tradition had been first communicated to me by Poit himself. But more than this, the doubt had arisen as to whether the being inhabiting my body was really mine or that of another. Many for a time doubted my real identity, and attributed the marvellous way in which, in my critical condition, I had managed to cover the sixty miles between the scene of the attack and their village, to the probability that the soul animating my body was other than human.

I noticed that the Chief, Mechi, and some of his men retired to a distance under a tree. After a time he came near, and informed me that they had decided to destroy Poit. They were urged not to do so, but the Indians said something about the throwing of the stone; and what this custom is I still do not know.

In the evening I managed to accomplish a three hours' journey on the road, and slept that night at the village of "The Father of Cats," and the next day—December 29—late in the afternoon, I succeeded in reaching Waikthlatingmangyalwa, the Mission station, having in eight days covered one hundred and ten miles from the scene of Poit's attack.

As to the events of this and the next six weeks, being in too exhausted a condition to understand what happened before and after my arrival at the station, and also at the time being purposely kept in the dark as to the attitude of the natives, I must depend on what I was told afterwards by members of the staff.

It seems that when the messenger brought in the news from the west, my young friend Philip (Keamapsithyo) and his brother, the troublesome witch-doctor Manuel, immediately procured two horses. Although it was late at night, and in spite of the fact that the animals were in poor condition, yet they trusted to being able to cover at least part of the journey with them. They had little hope of finding me alive, but made a start with all haste, both being exceedingly angry and fully bent on killing Poit. It seems that everywhere on the way they found their people greatly incensed at the crime that had been committed.

It was on Christmas Day, the hottest day of the year, that they found me as already described, and I was afterwards told that the thermometer on that day registered 110° Fahrenheit in the shade.[1]

On my arrival at the station I am told that the people burst into tears, and that a hush fell upon the whole village. I quote the words Hunt wrote in a letter to headquarters: "For some days the people were very quiet, and would come and inquire in an awestruck manner about his health, their eyes glistening with moisture. There was no laughing or shouting, and even at night, when they must have been greatly troubled by dreams, they refrained from exorcism with chant and rattle. They

[1] The Mission, as the authorized agent of the Argentine Government Observatory at Cordoba, is paid for its services and supplied with the instruments direct from the Observatory.

searched in the forest for honey for him, and were willing to do anything to help. Still, there was a something we could not account for. We heard reports from one visitor and another. It was evident that Grubb was regarded with superstition, as one that had risen from the dead."

It was feared that a possible rising might take place, the whole body of people, as far as the missionaries could see, being in an excitable and strange condition. My companions felt sure that in a short time a strong opinion would be formed, either against us, or for us and our religion. It appears, however, that their fears of impending trouble were groundless, and that, on the contrary, the Indians were entirely with us.

But as I grew stronger, and was able to form a clearer view of the general situation, I had ample and detailed proof of the superstitious attitude of the people towards me, and their uncertainty as to my identity. I was sitting one day, to quote an instance, resting in a deck-chair in the shade, and as the position of the sun changed, it was necessary for me to move farther into the shade. I was far too weak to carry the chair myself, although strong enough to raise myself up and crawl a few paces, so I beckoned to a girl—Pinsetawa-apkyitkya—to come and move the chair for me. She had known me for many years, and was, moreover, somewhat of a pet of mine, yet she approached with evident caution, and, keeping at a respectful distance from me, she caught hold of the chair, placed it hurriedly in the shade, and then, with an unmistakable look of fear, ran off to the village.

On another occasion a man to whom I was well known inquired, at a safe distance, after my health. He then said: "What is your name?" "Yiphenabanyetik, of course," I replied. But he, with an incredulous look, said; "I know it was Yiphenabanyetik; but who are you now?"

The people seemed assured of the identity of my body, but the puzzle to them was, who was inside?

One day, when sitting in the same spot in the shade, I saw a party of Kisapang approaching. They had arrived in the village on a visit of courtesy to me, and were now being formally

conducted into my presence by Esoabyabam, one of the Lenguas, who led them to within about twelve paces of me. Waving his hand in my direction, he turned to the Kisapang, and introduced me by saying in a very solemn voice: "There sits the BODY of Yiphenabanyetik." My visitors respectfully stood at a safe distance, and, after conversing in whispers for a few minutes, retired, evidently glad to leave my uncanny presence.

These incidents afford evidence that the Indians believed I had actually died, but doubted whether or not I was the living embodiment of my former self. Some years after, the Chief, Mechi, actually assured one of us that although he knew I was still the same Yiphenabanyetik, nevertheless he was convinced that I had died. It was this very idea of the resuscitation of my body, or at least of my miraculous preservation, that gave the first real impetus to the acceptance of the Gospel.

During the subsequent weeks, and up to the middle of February, I remained at the station, and made slow progress towards recovery. The only set-back I experienced was shortly after my arrival, when lying asleep in my hut. A tame tiger-cat had also gone to sleep on one of the beams overhead. What really happened to it I do not know. At any rate, it lost its balance and fell down from the beam, unfortunately right on my chest, and I woke up with a great fright, to find it spitting viciously in my face. In my weak and nervous condition I sustained a great shock, and the cat was made to pay the penalty of death for its unintentional fall, the owner being afraid it might again annoy me.

Fearing that complications might set in, I was advised to seek medical treatment. I had been suffering much from a certain irritation, and from peculiar watery bladders breaking out all over my body, which may have been caused by some poisonous substance on the arrow, but this I could not be sure of, as it is an open question whether or not Poit poisoned the arrow with which he shot me.

The nearest medical aid was nearly four hundred miles away, at Asuncion, whither I was taken in February to consult Dr. William Stewart, formerly Surgeon-General of the Para-

guayan Army during the war of 1865-70. He considered it necessary that I should go into the British Hospital at Buenos Ayres, which meant another journey of some nine hundred miles down river. There I was operated upon by Dr. O'Connor, surgeon of the British Hospital, and was frequently visited by Bishop Stirling, of the Falkland Isles. After recuperating in the hills of Cordoba, where I was attended by Dr. Schmidt, I felt sufficiently recovered to return to the Chaco, which I did in June.

I received a warm welcome, but many of the Indians were still sceptical of me; some even touched me to see if I was really flesh and blood. Shortly after my return several natives expressed a definite desire to become Christians. There was no doubt that the whole tribe had been strongly affected, and that the action of Poit had directly paved the way to the acceptance of the Gospel. Although we move in such matters as the offering of natives for baptism with the greatest care, yet the sincerity and earnestness of two, Keamapsithyo and another, were so genuine that we felt thoroughly justified, some fifteen months after, in presenting them. They were baptized Philip and James respectively, in June, 1899, by the Right Rev. Bishop Stirling, of the Falkland Isles, and thus was laid the foundation of the Lengua Indian Church.

LENGUA DOLL.

(Knuckle-bone, wrapped in rag.)

CHAPTER XXVII

POIT'S DEFENCE AND FATE

There is no record within the memory of any inhabitant of this region telling of an Indian being slain by his own tribesmen for the murder of a white man, far less for an attempted murder. Before the attempt on my life, many foreigners had been killed by Indians within the recollection of natives still living, and similar murders have occurred since; yet no punishment was meted out to the criminals. On the contrary, an Indian who killed a foreigner was looked upon by his people as a hero, and worthy of all respect. Yet in the face of this record, Poit was executed in a cold-blooded and formal manner by his own tribesmen, and with their unanimous consent, for the attempted murder of a white man, who without doubt was regarded with suspicion and dislike by many.

That Poit had to die the death of a murderer seems to have been their general verdict. Exactly by what means and methods they managed so speedily to get the opinion of the bulk of the people, scattered as they were over a large area, with only scanty communications, I am not in a position to judge. But one thing is quite clear, that the Indians far and wide were evidently unanimous, as is proved by the following facts.

Firstly, the Indians never take a very important step, especially such an unusual one as this, without feeling sure that public opinion is at their back. For one or two villages to have carried out this execution of their own accord, without the general approval of their countrymen, would have resulted in serious complications to them.

Secondly, the whole incident was so closely interwoven with

their superstitious and religious beliefs that the witch-doctors must have been consulted about it.

Thirdly, there is the fact that before my departure for medical treatment in Buenos Ayres, and after my return, natives from all parts came in to sympathize with and to congratulate me.

Fourthly, the fact that our teaching was afterwards welcomed in a degree which it had never been before, and that our influence over the people advanced by leaps and bounds. All this seems to point to unanimity in the condemnation and execution of Poit, which was carried out entirely without my knowledge or that of any of the staff; in fact, I was not told of it for some weeks after, lest it should upset me.

When the news, both of the attempted murder and of the execution of the criminal reached Paraguay proper, it caused great surprise and evoked much comment, because the people there had many opportunities of forming an opinion upon the attitude of Indians to foreigners; and so firm was the belief that an Indian would never take the part of a white man against his own people that for some years many doubted that Poit's execution had really taken place. Even the Mission party, who thoroughly understood the Indian character, would not for some time accept the statement of the Lenguas. It was not until the whole matter had been thoroughly sifted, carefully investigated and demonstrated, that they would believe it, in spite of the fact that the Indians produced at the station, and handed to the missionaries, the actual weapons with which they had killed Poit, and pointed out the place of execution.

For the account of the manner in which he was done to death I must depend entirely on the statement of the Indians. According to them, Poit, after his flight from the village upon encountering the bearer of my message to the station, made for the woods. He evidently became to some extent distraught. It is reported that when he killed an animal for his food, he tore it to pieces and devoured it raw. This no sane Indian ever does, but it is a peculiarity of native madness. When we consider the dread that Indians have of living alone, through their

particular fear of the spirits of the forest, and the state of terror he must have been in on account of his deed, it is highly probable that he became mad, at any rate for the time being.

Not having waited to hear what the messenger had to say, he could not have known the course of events subsequent to the time when he shot me. He could only have assumed that I had been found, and to some extent had communicated with his people; but the likelihood of encountering my vengeful spirit, the haunted conscience of the murderer, and the constant fear of being pursued perhaps by his own people, must have had a terrible effect upon him, and his life in the woods for the fourteen days or so before the people found him is horrible to contemplate.

How and where they caught him I know not. Suffice it to say that he was brought to a place where a feast was being held, to the south-west of Mechi's village. It transpired that when accused of the crime he did not deny it, but pleaded, "You surely will not kill me, since I am one of your own people?" He was told that he knew they all considered me as one of their own people, a Chief, and one who was much loved by many. But at this he appears to have remonstrated, saying that I was a comparative stranger, and had only recently come to their country, while he was an Indian, a near relative of theirs, and had played with them as a child. He did not want to die, he said, for he was young. Having heard that I was not really dead, he made a strong defence of that, but was simply told that it was not his fault, and that he had left me for dead. Besides, they were not quite sure whether I was actually dead or not, although they had seen me, and knew that I had arrived at the station.

When they had tried him in this manner, and had decided that he must die, a pyre was prepared near to him. They then gave him an intoxicating drink—probably beer mixed with the seed of a grass which acts as a strong opiate. A short time was allowed to elapse, and then the two chosen executioners drew near. One, a tall Indian named Kilpaisiamakselyakye, smote him several times on the head with a *machete* (a long

cleaver knife), while the other stabbed him repeatedly in the abdomen. His body was then placed upon the pyre and burned to ashes. When all was consumed, the ashes were taken up and scattered to the winds.

Although these particulars have been obtained solely from the various and not too distinct accounts furnished by the Indians, yet they all agree on the main points, and the whole proceedings tally with the customary rites attendant on the execution of a murderer.

They had intended killing, not only Poit, but in this case his family also; and the successful efforts we exerted to save the lives of his near connections, as well as our attempts on his own behalf, unavailing though they proved, made a very strong impression on the Indian mind. But what surprised them most was that we made no attempt whatever to call in the authorities in Paraguay to interfere in the matter. This abstention from any kind of vengeance, and refusal even to receive the compensation offered for the injury done, convinced the Indians of our disinterested and genuine friendship for them. Many of them, at least, expected that the Mission party would leave their country in disgust, and would never incur the risk of another venture; but the fact that I returned so shortly afterwards to their country—albeit against the best advice—demonstrated to them that we were void of fear, were by no means discouraged, and that we intended at all costs to prosecute our Mission. This conviction encouraged those who were inclined to adopt our teaching, and greatly disconcerted those who feared lest their ancient customs should be interfered with by our influence, because they at last saw that we were evidently determined not to yield until we had achieved our object.

Instead of procuring more arms, and adopting other precautions for our safety, we quietly observed our ordinary routine, and the Indians thus appreciated the fact that we still regarded them as our trusted friends.

It must also be remembered that, prior to this event, we had imparted to the Indians a considerable amount of Christian instruction. Being in reality very little different from our-

selves, although in outward appearance wild and strange, they, in common with the rest of mankind, are not satisfied with mere religious theory, but demand practical proof of its reality; or, in the words of Scripture, they make the demand: "Show me thy faith by thy works." We had endeavoured from the very beginning of our Mission to act up to the Christian life rather than merely to enjoin it; and the circumstances connected with this event in the Mission's history seemed, as it were, to serve as the keystone to the arch, and to enable the remaining part of the fabric to be built up. This incident also caused a deep sensation amongst the surrounding tribes, and the account of it spread far and wide; thus it served to open new districts to our influence, and attracted many from remote parts to visit our station, where we were in a position to deal with them with more advantage.

Speaking generally, it had two direct and important results. Firstly, it proved that the Mission party had been accepted by the Indians as different from any other foreigners; in other words, that we had been received as a part of their own people, and thus it broke down one great barrier to the acceptance of our teaching. And, secondly, it opened out to us a wide field of knowledge concerning their religion, customs, and laws, as well as a deeper insight than we had ever had before into their inner character, which is so strikingly portrayed in Poit's conduct, and in his motives for perpetrating such a crime. The whole affair was the result of superstition. That Poit was unprincipled and cold-blooded there is no gainsaying, but it somewhat mitigates the enormity of his crime when we realize that he was led to commit it through being overpowered by his ancestral belief.

In order that the reader may the more clearly grasp Poit's motives, and the inspiration which impelled him to such a deed, I shall sum up the whole matter in consecutive form, for from beginning to end it is an example of the closely-reasoning mind of the Indian.

Poit had been left in charge of property belonging to me, but he did not understand that it was property common

to our party. To him it was a private matter between us both.

Several Englishmen had been connected with the Mission, either directly or indirectly, before this event, and had left the country, never to return. Up to this time no furlough had been granted by the society, consequently the Indians had no idea of any one of us leaving for a protracted period and then returning to carry on our work. This happened to have been my first furlough since I left England early in 1886, and the Indians had come to regard me as a permanency in their country, looking upon me as a Chief, not in title, but in power. That I should leave the country and remain away for an indefinite time was to them conclusive proof that I had either tired of their country or become homesick for my own; many therefore assumed that it was very improbable that I should ever return.

Poit certainly never expected me to come back, and the pleasure and influence over his people that he would gain by claiming my wealth placed in his charge doubtless encouraged him to form this opinion. At any rate, he went so far as to kill some of the cows in his charge, and to dispose of some of the goods committed to his care, evidently with a view of impressing his people and thereby of obtaining the position of a Chief among them.

My arrival from furlough naturally filled him with dismay. He knew he would have to give an account of his stewardship, and was at his wits' end to know how to do it. One sin leads to another, and he was eventually proved to be the thief who had stolen the Indian money from the Mission store and Professor Graham Kerr's gun. It is also suspected that he stole various things from his own people. These thefts were committed undoubtedly in order that he might balance his accounts, and because he preferred to run the risk of detection in theft rather than that of being brought to task by me.

Finding his efforts to square his accounts futile, he became filled with still greater anxiety and fear, and accordingly it is not difficult to conjecture to what an extent he was disturbed

by dreams bearing on the subject, and to understand that they prompted him to take the steps he did.

It must be borne in mind that the Indian has implicit belief in dreams, and allows them to control his actions. Poit, according to Indian accounts, was greatly impressed by a dream which he had related to some Indians many weeks before he attempted my life, the gist of which was that I met him in an *open space in a forest*, accused him of misappropriating my property, and with a *gun shot* him. This dream he took as a clear warning of what would happen, and from the Indian point of view, if he could not otherwise avoid the catastrophe, he had perforce to endeavour to turn the tables upon me, and as far as possible deal with me as he dreamt I dealt with him.

An Indian must never use, for any other purpose, a weapon employed in certain rites connected with witchcraft, or in taking the life of a man It was for this reason that he stole the gun referred to. He could easily have borrowed one from his own people, and I am almost certain that at that time he possessed one of his own. But he certainly would not utilize his for such a purpose, as it would have debarred him from using it again, and if he had borrowed one from a fellow Indian, he would have had to return it. But, if the lender had discovered for what purpose it had been borrowed, the gun would have been useless, and therefore he would have had to make it good. With regard to the Professor's gun, he evidently thought otherwise. In the Indian's eyes he was a man of great wealth, and was known to have brought it into the country solely in order to reward some Indian who could collect valuable specimens for his scientific work. Poit therefore must have thought that he was best able to put up with the loss.

Such a hue and cry was raised over the loss of the gun that Poit found it expedient to abandon it. Had it been found in his possession, we should have been convinced of the truth of the rumours that he had misused my property. His object was to impress me with a sense of his unaltered friendship and fidelity, so that he might lure me unwittingly to the doom, which he considered was my just due, for it had been revealed

to him in the dream that I would assuredly take his life. But he knew that he would suffer when once I became suspicious of him, and that I should escape. He accordingly placed the gun in a spot where any Indian could find it in his search for game, as afterwards really happened.

Had the carriers with whom I started on the trip remained with me, he could not have taken my life. Evidently, as subsequent events prove, he had no fear of his own people wreaking vengeance upon him if he did kill me, but he was wise enough to know that a secret is best kept by one person, and that, if imparted to more, it was liable to leak out. My friends would then discover all, and he knew not what punishment might follow. It was therefore necessary to separate me from these carriers, as well as from those that I obtained later.

He also had implicit faith in the potency of the remedies which I usually carried with me, and for this reason he hid by the roadside my few medical stores. Had I had these with me at the time when he desired to attack me, he could not tell what power I might have derived from them.

At the village where we spent the last night together he exchanged his wooden-headed arrows for iron ones, as the reader will remember. I have been given to understand that, according to Indian superstition, if you cannot procure the proper article, which in the dream was a gun, you must get the nearest thing approaching to it, which in this case was an iron-headed arrow.

His story of the jaguar having attacked me was evidently carefully thought out beforehand. In selecting his road that morning, he purposely lured me to a similar place to that in which he had met me in his dream. It had, moreover, the great advantage of being a jaguar quarter, and a most unlikely spot to be visited by any wandering Indian. Therefore his made-up story could not have been better calculated for his purpose. If I had been attacked by the jaguar, and he had shot at it in my defence, and I had been killed, as he alleged, it is quite clear to anyone who knows the conditions of that

country that, in the course of a few days, the birds and beasts of prey would have left nothing but bones.

Poit, carefully avoiding the neighbouring villages, pressed on towards the Mission station with the assumed and laudable intention of imparting the sad tidings to my friends. This was calculated to cause a delay of several days before any search could be made, because the carrying of news by one man would be a slower process than by relays. If a search had been made and my remains found, everything would have helped to corroborate Poit's statement. Footprints of animals would have been numerous in such a place, and the arrow would have been found near my skeleton.

Poit, by expressing great grief at my death, would have disarmed suspicion, and my companions would have been so upset at the tragedy that further inquiry into the rumours connected with him would have probably ceased.

The only flaw in the whole consecutive course of his cleverly-thought-out and cunning strategem was that he shot at me and then fled. Why did he not stay to make sure of his victim? I believe that the Indian custom is that when killing a man they complete the deed by battering the head with clubs. An Indian report reached me that Poit was frightened by something at the time, and that he was not only overcome with horror at the deed he had committed, but that some supernatural fear impelled him to instant flight. He is supposed to have related this at the time of his execution. Whatever was the cause, it still remains a strange fact that he did not make perfectly sure of my death before leaving me, after all his careful preparations to compass it.

CHAPTER XXVIII

FINAL STRUGGLE OF THE WITCH-DOCTORS

During the three years subsequent to Poit's death, two forces were at work struggling for the mastery. The witch-doctors saw that our teaching was getting a firm hold of one section of the people, and that Christianity threatened to rob them of their influence, and to deprive them of the gains derived from their craft. We were still living in a heathen village, and the rule of heathenism was as yet the established power in the land, yet we had made such progress that we considered we could no longer deny baptism to three well-approved and thoroughly tested young men. They were baptized on October 14, 1900, at Waikthlatingmangyalwa, by the Rev. E. P. Cachemaille, the clerical secretary of the South American Missionary Society, who was then visiting our stations.

This advance on our part, together with the knowledge that several other Lenguas were candidates for baptism, greatly incensed the heathen party, and especially the witch-doctors Their anger, too, was aggravated by the fact that a few days previously the Chief of the station had died of snake-bite, and they held us responsible for his death. He had been attended by Dr. Lindsay, and had succumbed, not through the doctor's want of skill, but from his own obstinacy and that of his friends.

The witch-doctors had evidently resolved to take the first favourable opportunity to attempt to end the progress of Christianity once and for all. They waited until some members of the staff, including myself, and some of our staunchest Indian

adherents, had left the station to escort Mr. Cachemaille to araguay on his return after the baptisms.

We had no sooner started than signs of unrest were noticed, but as I was absent, I will quote Hunt's words describing the rebellion, in his report to headquarters:

"Soon after they left, the boy Andrew complained of a pain in his right groin, but said he did not feel 'sick inside.' Then John became ill also, but in two days was much better, and able to go on with his work. The third boy, Thomas, had been very ill before his baptism. We had our suspicions aroused, thinking, not unnaturally, that some of the witch-doctors had been giving these three recently baptized lads something to make them ill.

"Andrew grew worse; he could scarcely walk, staggering as he went, and one morning he fell to the ground when attempting to take a few steps. However, he was very cheerful, and even asked for the looking-glass to arrange his head-gear. It was thought best to remove him to one of our houses, so that we might attend to him. He had developed a high fever, and was very seriously ill.

"On the previous day, a messenger had come in from the west, accompanied by two men from one of the worst centres of witchcraft, one of them being a kind of Chief of the wizards. He had, when here on a former occasion, done wonderful things with his craft, taking three cats from a boy's stomach, for which extraordinary performance we gave him the name of 'The Father of Cats.' Some of his friends from an adjacent village were here (Waikthlatingmangyalwa) at the time, and gave him all the news, especially the death of the Chief from snake-bite and the departure of the party for the River Paraguay. As I entertained the visitors, I heard a full account of the news.

"Most of the best Indians were away at the river, and, with the exception of the boys, we were left without supporters. Philip and his brother Manuel, our two strongest Indian helpers, were away. Quite a number of witch-doctors and their assistants were here, and could carry out any evil design without opposition from their own people.

"Andrew had a bad night on the Saturday, and before

service on the Sunday there were mutterings of the coming storm. They blamed us for keeping the lad, and quietly said that they thought it would be well for him to be taken to their huts, to treat him after their own style. He had had no sleep, and the fever did not abate.

"As I was leaving for the service, a man was coming in to look at the boy, but I checked him, and he turned and came out with me with a decidedly ugly look on his face. As we parted I spoke hopefully of the boy's recovery, whereupon he glared at me, saying, 'He won't recover, he will die. You are killing him. You want to kill all our friends, as you killed the old Chief the other day. He will not get better.' He then walked away to the village.

"It was my turn to address the Lengua congregation, and I felt impelled to speak. I said that I had been much hurt at what I had heard, and I brought forth proof enough from the past to show that we had been their friends. I also explained again our object in coming out to them. The words were thoroughly understood, and went home.

"A few minutes after, I was sent for to come at once. I found in the sick-room a formal deputation of ten bad characters, who had come with the intention of taking the sick boy by force. We suggested to them to come outside and discuss the matter away from the sick-room. They were ten strong men; we were four and three boys. Their party consisted of the Wit, the Orator, the Chief Wizard, the Pessimist (as we had nicknamed them), and six assistants.

"I began by offering them a smoke. Then the Orator explained that they wanted to take the boy to the village. We refused to allow him to be taken, whereupon they turned nasty. They argued, first, that we killed the old Chief by giving him rice and bread when he was snake-bitten; secondly, that we desired to kill this lad, and generally to kill off their friends with our treatment; thirdly, that unless we let the boy go, the father, who had been sent for, would come with a big party, that they would be very angry, and would make it very unpleasant for us, practically hinting that we should be in danger of our lives.

"Though we did not expect personal violence, yet the situation was by no means pleasant. I asked what they would do if they took the boy. At this vacillation on our part they jumped up with fiendish glee, and promised that there should be no singing and no witchcraft, but that they only wished to watch over him. I then spoke to their Chief, and informed him that he was a witch-doctor. He denied it, but I reminded him of the kittens, and that quieted him. I then went to the two Christian boys, and asked them what they thought. They said the witch-doctors meant to perform the usual evil practices, and advised that the boy should remain where he was. I said we were few, and could not possibly resist them, supposing they used force. I suggested that they should bring up all the boys and friends, and very soon after they came trooping up—a good round number, small and sleepy. Nevertheless, it nonplussed the enemy.

"They talked, they sneered, they threatened, and the Wit remarked that he had been outside the church, and had heard all that I had said that evening. The Chief then desired to see the boy, and when I had taken him in, he spoke to him, asking if he were all right and if he recognized him, receiving a reply in the affirmative. The Chief then asked me to pray, which I did; whereupon he said: 'Now you see I am not a witch-doctor; say you were deceiving.' I replied that I would not take back the words I had said. They went off muttering and scowling, and in an angry mood, not even wishing us good-night.

"We expected and prepared for their return. The boys kept watch at the door, and the other premises were protected, but nothing occurred during the night.

"Early next morning we sent off a messenger for Mr. Grubb, Dr. Lindsay, and Philip. We still hoped that the boy would recover, and that the doctor would be able to do something for him. We wanted Philip to find out exactly the mood of the people, and we wished Mr. Grubb to be here in case of an uproar, which seemed very probable. The despatching of that messenger undoubtedly spoiled any well-laid plans. They now turned completely round, and tried to get into favour again,

and to make out that we were their friends. This made us more suspicious than ever, and we looked forward with dread to the coming night.

"In the afternoon the father of the sick boy arrived. The people met him, and tried to persuade him to get his son conveyed to the village. At first he desired it, but when he had seen the boy, he only asked to sit up with him. The people were angry, but the father was deeply moved at the sight of his son, and remained with him. The lad grew worse, and at 3.30 a.m. he breathed his last. The father and other watchers rushed from the room, being afraid of the boy's spirit. We delayed the funeral, in the hope that Mr. Grubb would arrive, but at 9 o'clock the sad ceremony was performed.

"Everything seemed to be in a state of disquietude throughout the day. We were completely unstrung by the loss of the boy Andrew, and exhausted with the watching. At night ghosts were seen by the people, portions of the roof were thrown off, figures were seen behind houses, and next day whispered conversations were going on in many parts of the village. How thankful we were to see Mr. Grubb and his party arrive!"

There is no doubt, from what I have been able to gather, that the witch-doctors had poisoned the recently baptized men. Paisiam-amaak (Andrew) had evidently received the biggest dose, and this poison may probably have set up inflammation. The doctor, from what he was told of the symptoms, considered that it might have been appendicitis. The natives do use poison, and not long before this a man had died of poisoning, but whether by accident or not I cannot say. Some of our Indian adherents informed me that in their opinion the lads had been poisoned, and it is certainly significant that all three should suffer at the same time, and with the same symptoms, while no one else in the village showed any such signs.

I can quite sympathize with the unpleasant and, I must confess, somewhat dangerous position in which I found my companions placed. The only mistake that they seem to have made was in not taking a high enough hand with the witch-doctors from the beginning. I have always found that in deal-

ing with Indians it is fatal, in a crisis, to give way to them in the least. They are masters of bluff, and can only be overcome by the irresistible force of stronger will-power, or of more successful bluff than their own.

Finding the village in a very unsettled and still rebellious state, it was necessary for us, with the least possible delay, to take prudent steps to get the upper hand. On arriving at the village, many of the people—among them most of the ring-leaders of the trouble—came out with apparent pleasure to welcome me, but I absolutely refused to take any notice of them. The Indian is very proud and sensitive, and they resented this act, as I intended they should. I then took the first opportunity of gathering all possible information from my companions. Once armed with this, I retired to my room with my powerful ally, Philip. I instructed him to go up to the village to his own hut, but on no account to show an aggressive attitude—to mix freely with the people, learn all he could, and then to communicate with me privately. The result was highly satisfactory.

The first man to be tackled was one of the leading witch-doctors, Pinsetawa, Philip's own father-in-law. Philip had somehow or other found out that he had been the chief ghost referred to, and that he had produced fear among the ordinary people by surreptitiously, during the night, pushing off the palm-logs from the roof of Philip's house with a long pole. I therefore sent a boy to tell him that he was wanted. He at once came to my room, and entered with a most affable manner. I told him I had heard that during the previous night many ghosts had been about, and also some devils. He assured me quite seriously that such had been the case, and that he and the people were very much alarmed, adding that they were very glad that I had returned, as they knew I was very strong, and not afraid of such visitors. I admitted this, and said that I had learnt that many tiles had been knocked off the roof by them, but that I was particularly angry because they had specially selected my friend Philip's house for their pranks.

I assured him that I could not possibly allow the spirits

to repeat this behaviour another night, and, taking him to one of my windows, I showed him that it commanded a good view of Philip's house. I then pointed to my Winchester rifle and the eleven cartridges which it contained, and told him that as soon as I heard the first palm-tile fall I should fire straight in that direction, to warn the spirits off. I then bade him adieu. Needless to add, there was no destruction to property that night.

The next man to be interviewed was no less a personage than an old friend of mine, Cacique Antonio, the Chief of a little neighbouring village. He, I had learnt, had prowled about at night, making noises near the staff's quarters, with a view to intimidate them, and had also been overheard saying that the English were "shaking in their insides," that they were not strong, and that the people need not be afraid of them; also that they were few in number, while the Indians were many.

I adopted a different tone with Antonio, and took care to meet him with a goodly number of Indians near. I then went up to him and shook hands with him affectionately. "Antonio," I said, "you are my friend; you have always been my friend; you would not, I am sure, let anyone hurt me. Now, the witch-doctors here" (some were present, and I looked sideways at them) "are very angry, and I am much afraid of them, but you will see that they do not hurt me. Look at my arms, Antonio; they are very thin, and I have no muscle, and 'my stomach is shaking with fear.' If any of these men were to wrestle with me, they would put me on the ground as if I were a small boy. But you will protect me, won't you?"

The witch-doctors in question scowled darkly, but said nothing; they understood the sarcasm. Then, retreating a few steps, I scanned him and some of the others up and down, and turning to the people, I laughingly said, in a changed voice, "Just look at them; who do you think could possibly be afraid of them? Why" (addressing the Orator, the worst character of the party), "you, my friend, are not very far from the grave; before long your friends will be preparing it for you." This was too much for him, and he disappeared. He did not like

this remark coming from me; I believe he thought there was more behind it than scarcasm.

Addressing "The Father of Cats," I told him it was notorious that he was not brave, and if he liked I could refer to some incidents in his previous history, and that instead of talking about what he could do with the English, he had better go and produce some more kittens. I then walked away.

Next day I interviewed the witch-doctor of the village, Keamap-apanko-yakye-abayabam, and the Chief's son, both of whom had been absent, and had therefore not taken part in the disturbance. They were quite pleased with themselves, and assured me they had had nothing to do with the disturbance. "Oh yes," I said, "that is quite true, but you knew all about it, and only wanted to save yourselves getting into trouble. You profess to be our people, and yet you slip away and leave us alone when strangers come into your village and make things unpleasant. You are just like snakes slipping away through the grass when you feel a 'camp' fire coming. You are a poor specimen to be the Chief of the village."

Shortly after the Orator came to me. He had unfortunately, or fortunately, inflammation of the eyes that day, and in the mildest manner asked for medicine. I told him I knew nothing about medicine, and that my companions were ignorant, too, and that such medicines as we had were bad remedies, reminding him how the other day the Chief had died under our hands. "Why," I said, "we are not your friends; we only came here to kill your people. But you are a witch-doctor; you surely know how to cure sore eyes, for you can do wonderful things! There are many of you here; go and ask your companions for medicine." Later in the day, however, his eyes were attended to by one of the staff.

That evening I called some of the Indians together, and decided on the punishment we should inflict upon the disturbers of the peace. It was determined that those who were able to should give two sheep each as compensation for the annoyance they had caused, and those who could not should work two days for us with the hoe, not only morning and evening, but also

throughout the heat of the day, without rest or pay. The decision was communicated to the culprits, and all agreed quietly and without demur. "The Father of Cats" set off the next day, so we understood, to bring in his sheep from his village, but about midday a messenger arrived from him with the following communication for me: "Tell Yiphenabanyetik that he may be a great Chief, but that I also am a great Chief, and I refuse to give him two sheep." I immediately despatched a messenger to say I was very sorry I had overlooked the fact that "The Father of Cats" was so great a Chief; that I could not think of asking him for two sheep, but that so great a Chief must bring three. Eventually we obtained them. We decided to sell the sheep and to devote the proceeds to the purchase of a large lamp for the church.

The people did not hear the end of this disturbance for a long time. The Indians have long memories, and it is quite a common thing for a man, when he wants some favour from you, or when you are upbraiding him, to recall all the kind actions he has done for you for years back. Again, when it suits their purpose, they will bring up against you anything they can possibly recollect to your detriment since they made your acquaintance. We have often found it very useful to adopt this native custom, and for a long time afterwards we did not forget to remind them frequently of their unfriendly and reprehensible conduct on this occasion.

We had passed through a very important crisis, and realized clearly that, if not the last, it was one of the great duels between heathenism and Christianity. Providentially we had got the better of them. But the Indian, when it suits him, easily forgets what he does not like to remember, and his disposition is such that he makes a strong effort to obliterate any unpleasant memories affecting himself, and tries as much as possible to prevent them influencing his life.

We had, for the time being, the upper hand of the witch-doctors, and we were determined to maintain it as far as lay in our power. We accordingly took every opportunity in private conversation and public teaching to expose their errors. In

this we were ably supported by the native converts and those who were candidates for baptism.

Philip, when addressing the people in church the day on which the new lamp was hung, did not mince matters in his attack on witchcraft. The gist of his address was: "Before these people came amongst us we were in darkness, just as we should be in this church were there no lamp at all; but after they came we soon had a little light, and we began to understand some things, but only a little. We are anxious to know more; we shall not be satisfied till we know all. You witch-doctors, influenced by the evil spirits, endeavoured to extinguish the little light that we had. You are as we were, and the evil spirits urged you on; but the Chief of heaven is very great, and see what He has done. We have now, instead of a small lamp giving a dim light, a beautiful and brilliant light, as is seen in the trading-houses of the Paraguayan town of Concepción.

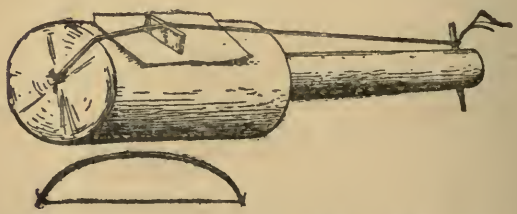
"Through obeying the devil you have had to pay for this better light. You are the devil's followers, we are God's followers. You have paid for the light for us to worship God by, and to make it more easy for us to teach you about the True Light. You witch-doctors will no longer wield power; in fact, I think that there will soon be no witch-doctors. This has not been a village of God's people, but now it will be; and those who do not agree with our works had better go and live on the other side of the River Monte Lindo."

Philip, although a Christian, had a comparatively weak grasp of Christian principles. His face was earnestly set in the right direction, and he was full of zeal, but he had at this time very little idea of Christian liberty. He had somewhat of the spirit of the early disciples, being filled with righteous indignation and anger, and desiring to bring down the fire of Heaven upon the stubborn.

His address, however, had a very salutary effect, although we could not approve of the last clause, and it was, furthermore, somewhat prophetic in character. Very few years passed before Waikthlatingmangyalwa had become in reality a Christian

village. Of the ringleaders in this rebellion, many have since become sincere and earnest Christians; and it would be difficult to-day to find an Indian within the Mission sphere of influence so bold as to admit that he had anything whatever to do with witchcraft.

The Church in less than ten years has grown and developed to an extent such as Philip, in his most enthusiastic moments, could not have conceived possible.



HATHPANG-LENGUA ONE-STRINGED FIDDLE, WITH BOW.
(String of horse-hair; body of palm, hollowed out)

CHAPTER XXIX

'TWIXT OLD AND NEW

Most people look for far too great and rapid results from Missions; in fact, there seems to be a wrong conception of the office of the Christian Church abroad at the present day. Men cannot be compelled to become Christians; men cannot be forced to be good. The ordinary man is naturally sinful, and all we can do is to try to influence him to such an extent that he will "cease to do evil and learn to do good." We sometimes find heathen quite interested in and favourably inclined towards Christianity when it is put before them, while others hate and strongly oppose it.

A very common idea is that, if missionaries were numerous enough and consecrated enough, the whole heathen world would become Christian. It might become nominally so, but we have no reason to look for genuine Christianity among heathens in any greater proportion than we find it amongst ourselves, highly privileged though we have been.

The effect of a Mission among a heathen people is varied and widespread. The teaching of the missionaries opens up a new line of thought to the natives. Education, which forms part of the work of most Missions, gradually enlightens and widens the view of those who come under its influence. They begin to take a different view of life, their old fears and prejudices are shaken, they begin to realize that they are as other men, and that their former awe and dread of the white man was to a great extent unwarranted. Their uncultivated imaginations conceived of him as a powerful being, all-knowing, and almost supernatural, whereas in reality the gulf between them was a

very narrow one. The result of this change of view is that the heathen becomes more venturesome, more presuming, and less respectful to the white man; and if during this transitory period the European fails to handle the native wisely, kindly, justly, and firmly, the consequences may prove disastrous both to the coloured man and to the white.

We all know that sudden changes from one social or religious state to another are almost invariably attended with evil consequences; but surely no reasoning man would ever assert that it is better to keep a people in ignorance and slavery than to allow them to endeavour to attain to a higher and nobler life, simply because during the transition period irregularities and disorders are liable to result.

Such strivings after what is better, although they may result disastrously to some, are surely to be encouraged rather than repressed, because that which is aimed at is a step nearer to perfection.

It is unfortunate, although I do not see how it is to be avoided, that during the struggle after something better, whether it be religious or social, a great many people, while they do not attain to nor share in the higher development, yet are shaken in their old beliefs and unsettled in their social condition. They are in a worse state than before, and are like derelict vessels abandoned by their crews, and drifting about aimlessly, a danger to themselves and all others around them.

The history of the Chaco Mission, and of its effect upon the natives, illustrates in some measure the truth of these remarks. The Indian was to a very large extent governed and kept in order by the force of customs and public opinion which had existed for generations. These customs were for the most part either evil, unpractical, or absurd; and their public opinion was such that it fettered and weakened rather than stimulated and strengthened them. The teaching and influence of the Mission was necessarily such as to impress the whole people with a sense of the weakness of their position. While many have followed the better and wiser course which has been shown them, the greater number are either halting dubiously between the two

opinions, or, having lost all faith and respect for their former ideas, have drifted into carelessness, recklessness, and indifference.

We were the first white people with whom they had close and intimate acquaintance. Our manner of life among them was such as to impress them with our superiority; they therefore respected us, and yielded in great measure to our authority. But since the further development of the country has set in, they have unfortunately come in contact with many whose lives are such as to produce in them a sense of contempt rather than of respect. It is a rude shock to an Indian to meet with one of a race of whom formerly he had only an indistinct idea, but whom, nevertheless, he considered his superior, and suddenly to find that in moral life, courage, honesty, and sense of justice, he is no better, but rather inferior to himself. And it must be clear to all that the unavoidable intercourse of the Indian with such white men is a greater obstacle to the work of the missionary than the opposition of heathenism itself. The result is that the partially enlightened Indian has lost his fear of, and trust in such Europeans. Nevertheless, having had a taste of the greater attractions of civilization, he naturally seeks intercourse with foreigners whose moral life is more on his own level, rather than with those at the Mission stations, where the discipline is such as to prove irksome to all who do not really value a purer and higher life.

It is true that the first enlightenment of the savage has come through his intercourse with us, but, finding our system uncongenial to him, he naturally drifts to the settlements, where his thirst for change and variety may be gratified without the restraining influence of Christianity. Such Indians soon become worse than the heathen. These cannot with any justice be called Mission Indians, yet they are very often popularly put down as such, and their bad behaviour is entirely attributed to the teaching they have received from the missionaries.

It cannot surprise anyone if some Indians trained on a Mission station, and even recognized as Christians, should turn out failures. We have too many of such failures among our own people to be able to throw stones at recent converts from

heathenism who fall. For the good of the Indian race as a whole, and the peaceful development of the country, it is a pity that the white men interested therein do not co-operate more heartily and loyally with missionaries, who undoubtedly have great influence over the natives. Advantage to all would, in time, accrue from such friendly co-operation. In our case, however, there is much to encourage us. We have had little to complain of up to the present on the part of the white men, and from out of heathenism we have gathered a fairly substantial and satisfactory following, which the next chapter will deal with pointedly but briefly.

We are at present in the transition stage. There are large numbers of Indians in doubt as to what course to pursue. Their natural instincts are averse to a high and pure life, but they have realized that there is little or no truth in that which they have hitherto believed in and cherished. From out of this restless, dissatisfied, and questioning mass we hope yet to win a large proportion, chiefly through the example of practical Christianity, which is now lived daily before them by some of their own people.

Numbers will undoubtedly prefer rather to follow their own evil inclinations, and must inevitably degenerate still further, and eventually disappear, for they have not the new virility, and yet have discarded their former wild simplicity. Thus they will prove unable to hold their own, either with their untouched heathen compatriots, or with the Europeans, or with their own Christian brethren. There is no doubt that in the long run righteousness and true manliness must win the day; the unprincipled, vicious, and self-seeking, by their own actions, are inevitably preparing the way for their own downfall.

CHAPTER XXX

CHRISTIANITY VERSUS HEATHENISM

The Chaco Mission has attained its majority. Twenty-one years ago Adolpho Henricksen and his two companions arrived in this practically unknown land, and came amongst its still less known people. They had to contend with the physical difficulties of a primeval tropical country. To the west, north, and south barbarism reigned supreme, extending over ten degrees of latitude and about five of longitude, and then again (with unimportant intervals) northward to the great Amazon. Only a few foreign settlements clung to the banks of the River Paraguay.

The people were disorganized and nomadic savages, possessing nothing that might be termed property, thriftless, and never having a store of food. The missionaries were therefore compelled to provide for themselves. The natives had few laws, and made very little attempt at government, no trades, and no ambition to rise above the level on which they stood.

Their country was under the dominion of the Republics of Paraguay, Argentina, and Bolivia. In that part dominated by Paraguay, where the Mission began its work, no police or military force was maintained to give security in the interior. The Indians were entirely heathen, and had never come under the influence of Christianity.

That there was great danger in entering their country, and much more in attempting to settle among them, has, I think, been made clear. But the South American Missionary Society gave instructions to their men, not only to enter into and dwell in their land, whatever the risk, but to attempt no less a task

than that of opening up this unknown land, of revolutionizing the native customs, habits, mode of life, and laws, and of ameliorating the condition of the people by winning them over as Christian disciples.

During these twenty-one years the average Mission staff has not numbered five men actually on the field. Only four men have exceeded ten years' service, and yet, in spite of small numbers and limited means, and the immense and varied difficulties which had to be overcome, I leave the reader to judge, from the results which I give, whether or not we have laboured in vain, whether we were justified in our belief that this degraded people could be elevated and developed; and (most important of all in our eyes) whether the Lenguas are not only capable of receiving Christianity, but of forming a Church which shall be self-supporting, and, in its turn, missionary.

Where formerly it was dangerous for a white man to go without an armed party, anyone can now wander alone and unarmed, so far as any risk from the Indians may be apprehended, over a district rather larger than Ireland. In a country where fifteen years ago there were no tracks other than Indian footpaths resembling sheep-tracks at home, now about four hundred and fifty miles of cart-track have been made in order that the Mission bullock-carts might readily traverse the country. Where formerly tribal war was common, peace has reigned for many years over a district as large as Ireland and Scotland combined.

Only ten years ago it would have been impossible for anyone to establish an *estancia* (cattle-ranch) in the interior. The wire fences would have been cut and the cattle stolen and killed, and it is highly probable that those tending them would also have run great personal risk. Through the direct instrumentality of the Mission a large English Company, with its headquarters in London, has now been established at a point more than ten leagues in the interior, where they possess two hundred and fifty thousand acres of land, and employ Indians, together with Paraguayans, as cowboys, and in fencing and transport work.

Another large South American Company, founded by one of the leading merchants of Paraguay, has also been located in our vicinity. The founder acknowledged, in the newspapers of the Republic, that had it not been for the civilizing influence of the Anglican Mission, he could not possibly have ventured upon such an undertaking. This gentleman is not a member of our Church, but a Paraguayan professing the Roman faith. The company possesses over two hundred thousand acres of land, and runs some thirty thousand head of cattle. It is worthy of note that the best progress made by Europeans into the interior has been along the Mission routes. An Argentine *estanciero* remarked to me one day that he had no fear of establishing himself in the interior so long as he had a Mission station in the vicinity.

When I arrived in the country, trade with the Indians was practically non-existent; but at the present time, directly and indirectly, it has attained to very large dimensions. Nor does this newly-opened trade only benefit the world at large; but the Indians employed by Europeans spend their wages in the purchase of imported goods. I remember the time when a knife, an axe, a pair of scissors, a hoe, an iron pot or a kettle were so seldom possessed by an Indian that they created deep interest, and formed the subject of earnest conversation. But now these articles are in the hands of almost every Indian far and wide, and most of them bear English trade-marks. Mosquito-nets of calico, coloured handkerchiefs, and clothing were unknown; whereas now, wherever the Mission influence has spread, an Indian considers himself badly off if he does not at least own a mosquito-net. The Manchester trade-marks are now familiar to these people. Yet how often we hear the remark that money cannot be spared for such a Mission as this since there is so much poverty at home; and here we find a handful of men opening up a new field to English enterprise, and providing employment for the Mother Country.

In addition to this, I might quote the indirect increase of trade and wealth (in which England largely participates), through the enhanced value of land, the augmented trade in

hides, and the importation of goods for the use of the workmen, not to mention the demand for vast quantities of wire for fencing in the large ranches. I myself could have purchased land twenty years ago for twenty or thirty pounds a square league (a Paraguayan league is a little under three miles), which quite recently has changed hands at twelve to fifteen times these figures. The small sum of money, therefore, which has been expended on this Mission, as the reader will be able to see, has been well worth the outlay on material grounds alone.

A people who have led a nomadic life for generations are not easily weaned from it. We have, however, succeeded in inducing about three hundred Indians to adopt a settled and industrious life. The majority of these can be found to-day permanently established on the Garden Colony of Enmakthlawaia. There each Indian family possesses its own house, which is an infinitely superior structure to their former frail booths. Each has its allotted portion of land for cultivation. Their herd of cattle they own under a scheme of co-operation which consists of fifty shareholders, the largest holder possessing fifteen hundred dollars.[1] In addition to this, the people work whenever they can find employment, the more intelligent learning trades, chiefly carpentry, under the instruction of Mr. W. Sanderson. A few have recently established trading stores of their own.

This progress could not possibly have been achieved unless the people had been prepared by education. The school has been a marked success. Not only are many Indians able to read the literature now existing in their own language, but some can correspond by letter with missionaries on furlough. But space will not allow me to deal in detail with the scholastic work.

The training of the young is the making of a nation. The people are not yet sufficiently advanced to deal in accounts, and for this reason the Indian Savings Bank is under the management of one of the staff, at present Mr. G. R. Farrow, who is the headmaster of the school, and who manages their investments, amounting in all to over twenty thousand dollars. In

[1] The Paraguayan dollar varies considerably, but has ranged during the last twelve years from threepence to ninepence.

addition to this, the natives possess sheep, goats, horses, etc., and the aggregate wealth from all sources of this particular settlement now exceeds one thousand pounds.

Our policy from the very beginning has been to combine theoretical education with practical industrial training. We realize that a people suddenly raised to a higher level than that which they have occupied for generations are very apt to become unduly inflated. The Indian is a conceited person, and ignorance and conceit go hand in hand. He is a wise man who knows his own deficiencies. The Indian, for the next generation or so, must be content to earn his living by manual labour, but in order thoroughly to fit him for the task, and to develop his higher nature in the process, a certain amount of theoretical training is necessary.

While we impress upon him that we regard him as a fellow-man and brother, we at the same time leave him under no misapprehension as to his place in the world being a humble one until such time as, in the course of evolution, he is qualified for a higher plane. The educated scoundrel is the worst of his type. Mere civilization cannot be considered an altogether unmixed blessing, unless it is invested with moral character, which is best developed through the teaching of pure Christianity. The moral and spiritual instruction of the people, therefore, has always been our primary endeavour. Our aim and desire are that the race may become a self-reliant, self-respecting, honest, intelligent, industrious, and Christian community, thus fitted to take their proper part in life.

We realize that man values that for which he has had to struggle. To pauperize is to ruin a people. Our ambition is to see this people grow up like the sturdy oak, deep-rooted and able to stand alone, and not luxuriate like the parasitic creepers in their forests. We have therefore insisted, whenever possible, that an Indian shall pay for everything he requires, and in order to pay, that he should "labour, working with his hands the thing which is good." We therefore charge parents a small fee for the education of their children. It is true that this fee is by no means commensurate with the cost, but it is the founda-

tion of a good principle, and moreover has the advantage that it makes the parent all the more anxious that his child should reap the full benefit of what he pays for.

The reader will have gathered from the chapter on witchcraft that the introduction of scientific medical treatment was very necessary, but it was many years before the people appreciated it. Now, however, we have a small hospital, which has cost only one hundred pounds, generously contributed by friends in Ireland. Mr. E. G. Bernau, who has made a special study of the diseases common to the Chaco, is in charge of it, and has under him two Indians—a man and wife—whom he is training with much success. The Indians take out tickets yearly, for which they pay, and which entitle them to medical treatment.

No community can exist, as the world is at present constituted, without law and order. The Paraguayan Government have, for nearly eighteen years, officially recognized us as their representatives among the Indians, and have granted us all necessary powers. We have therefore been endeavouring gradually to educate the Indian in municipal government. A small Indian police force, approved by the Government, is being trained in the duties required of them. Strict discipline is maintained on the station, and Indian observance of law and order is being rapidly consolidated.

Civil crimes practically do not exist, or are of a very trifling character. Infanticide has not only died out within our immediate sphere of influence, but is greatly on the decline even among those more remote from us. Thus, a race which at one time showed signs of becoming extinct is beginning to take on a new lease of life and vigour, the birth-rate of late years comparing favourably with that of England. Epidemics, too, such as small-pox and measles, which were formerly so deadly, have ceased to inspire serious alarm, thanks to medical care and the intelligent and willing co-operation of the people in and around the settlement. As soon as we are able to extend our work, such beneficial results as those above mentioned will be proportionately increased.

CHRISTIANITY VERSUS HEATHENISM

Lastly, I come to the Christian Church as the crowning effort of all our work. From out of a chaotic mass of savage heathenism we have now, by the aid of the Divine power, the satisfaction of having admitted by baptism into the Church of Christ one hundred and forty-nine Lenguas, and of this number there are no fewer than thirty-eight communicants. There are, in addition, at least an equal number of probationers, or inquirers. But these figures do not represent the total extent of Christian progress. Over a large area the whole tone of the people has been changed for the better; the Gospel message has been clearly delivered, and we can afford to wait in patience until the Spirit of God moves them, as He has done others. Our business is to plant and water diligently and faithfully; it is God who gives the increase. The Church of England Prayer-Book, almost complete, together with the four Gospels, portions of the Epistles and Genesis, have been translated and printed in Lengua, and also a small Hymnal set to familiar tunes.

The duty of Christian giving is not omitted in our services. Collections for the sick and poor, Church expenses, and the building of the new church are taken up regularly by the Indian churchwardens. Occasionally we direct their attention to other needs outside of themselves, in order that they may develop a broad and generous Christian spirit. For example, a small sum was contributed to the Indian Famine Fund, which, when explained, naturally appealed to their sympathies. Surely it seems a miracle of grace when one contemplates those people, who a few years ago were barbarians, are now reverently receiving the rite of baptism, joining Sunday by Sunday in the same worship as ourselves, and from time to time kneeling devoutly in Holy Communion. Nor let it be thought that these Indians are lightly admitted to the privileges of Christian fellowship. Their probation is long and severe; more is asked of them than is generally required of Christians at home. It is true that they are sometimes weak, but let us remember the slough from which they have been dragged. If strict scrutiny were made of home congregations, and the weak ones weeded out how bare some pews would be!

It is absolutely necessary that for many years to come this young Christian Church should have supervision and instruction; but from the time that we admitted our first two converts in 1899 we have impressed upon the Christians that it is their duty, and must be their ambition, to administer as far as possible their own Church, which they do even now to some extent. Several are capable of addressing their congregations; they read the Lessons in Church, act as churchwardens, and are consulted in the admission of probationers to Baptism, and as to the fitness of the baptized for Confirmation. They also have been used (under supervision) for many years as itinerating evangelists; and lately a school of instruction has been established for the training of future evangelists.

Our hope is that this young Church will become an earnest missionary body, and that thus the Indian will be converted by men of his own people.

In the foregoing pages I have endeavoured to present a picture of these strange Indians of the Chaco, and to trace their history from obscure early times down to the period when I first knew them, and made my long sojourn amongst them. And now it is my earnest desire that many of my readers may be interested in the future of this hitherto unknown people. If we think of the savagery and barbarism in which they were found, and of the efforts to raise and develop them so perseveringly made during the last twenty years, in the face of their deep-rooted adherence to witchcraft and its attendant enormities; if we think of the amelioration of their lot which, under God's blessing, has followed, should not the further advancement of this people and of their Church be recognized as a noble object of Christian ambition?

APPENDIX I

THE CHACO, ITS TRIBES, EXPEDITIONS AND DISCOVERIES

That great, low-lying, alluvial plain known as the Gran Chaco is situated in the interior of South America, and is bounded on the east by the Rivers Paraná and Paraguay, and on the south and west by the Argentine Provinces and the Republic of Bolivia. It extends roughly over ten degrees of latitude and five of longitude, comprising an area of approximately two hundred thousand square miles.

Politically it is under the domination of the Republics of Argentina, Paraguay, and Bolivia, but with the exception of a fringe of settlements near the boundaries, the interior is entirely in the hands of Indians. The principal tribes are the Mataccos, Chiriguanas, Tobas, Lenguas, Suhin, Kisapang, Chamacocos, and the Bororu. The total population is estimated at one hundred and thirty-five thousand, but it is impossible to speak with accuracy owing to their nomadic habits and the difficulty of obtaining anything like a census.

The average height of the Lengua men is five feet seven inches, and of the women five feet four inches. Both sexes are well proportioned, and their powers of endurance are strongly marked. Their skin is soft and of a reddish chocolate colour, but a variety of shades is seen even in the same tribe.

The history of the many attempts to explore the Chaco is concisely given by Professor J. Graham Kerr, of Glasgow University, who formed one of an expedition under Captain John Page, in 1889, which ended disastrously to its leader and many followers. In a paper read before the Scottish Geographical Society in 1892, he said, "Chaco exploration is a sad record in many respects, showing an enormous expenditure of human life, with but very slight resulting gain to our knowledge.

"Exploration in southern South America may be said to have commenced in 1506, when Juan de Solis discovered the estuary of

the La Plata, which was for some time afterwards known by his name. Twenty years later Sebastian Cabot again entered its waters. On its banks he found Indians with a profusion of silver ornaments, and from this he christened the estuary in which he was the *Rio de la Plata* ("the River of Silver"). At its upper end he found the mouths of two distinct rivers, and the western of these he followed as far as the mouth of the Bermejo. Cabot was thus the discoverer of the Paraná and Paraguay Rivers, and, we may say, of the Chaco. He planted settlements on the Rio de la Plata, and also on the Paraguay River, and colonization at once began. In 1537 Juan de Ayolas navigated the River Paraguay to latitude 20° 40′, and was told by the Guarani Indians that there existed to the westward a nation possessing great stores of silver. He thereupon resolved to march across in search of them. He penetrated far into the Chaco, and on his return, whilst traversing a marsh, was fallen upon by the Payaguás, and massacred, with all his men. Almost immediately after the tragic end of Ayolas, Alvarez Nuñez de Vera Cabeza de Vaca was appointed Governor of La Plata, and he, in a military expedition against the Guaycurús (1542), may be said to have inaugurated that policy of Indian extermination which is carried on to the present day.

"Twelve years later we find the Chaco attacked from its north-west side, when the Viceroy of Peru despatched one of his officers, Andreas Manso, at the head of an expedition to attempt the conquest of the Chaco. He, however, merely managed to cross the Pilcomayo into the Chaco Central, and was surprised during the night by the Chiriguanos, losing his life with those of all his followers. Hence this central part of the Chaco received the name of Llanos de Manso. During the following century (the seventeenth) there is little to chronicle, save that the Jesuits, from their headquarters in Paraguay, sent numerous missionaries into the Chaco, whose efforts towards the permanent conversion of the Indians were quite fruitless, and many of whom lost their lives in the attempt. This and the eighteenth century were also characterized by several military attempts at Chaco exploration and subjugation, mostly at the instance of successive Governors of Tucuman, such as Angelo Peredo (1670), Urizar (1710), Espinosa (1759), Matorras (1774), and Arias (1780). These, however, I pass over without further comment, and I shall now restrict myself, from time considerations, to the exploration of the River Pilcomayo. We again find the Jesuits first in the field.

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"In 1721 Padre Patiño succeeded in penetrating a long way up the river, but was compelled ultimately to beat a rapid retreat by an attack from the Toba Indians, in which he lost several of his men. Twenty years later Padre Castanares made a somewhat similar journey up the Pilcomayo, and with similar result. And in 1785 Don Felix De Azara, the celebrated traveller and naturalist, ascended the river for a short distance.

"The expeditions of the present century have been numerous, and I shall mention only the more important. Four of these started from Bolivia, and attempted to descend the river. Those of Magariños and v. Nivel (1843-44) were forced to return, owing to the immense numbers of hostile Indians who menaced them on all sides. That of Crevaux, the celebrated botanist and traveller, has an especially sad interest attached to it. He started from Tarija in Bolivia early in February, 1882, with only fourteen companions. They encountered large numbers of Indians during the early days of their journey, who appeared exceedingly friendly, and so inspired Crevaux's confidence that it is said he removed the strikers from the locks of his men's rifles to prevent them from alarming the Indians by firing. All went well until the afternoon of April 27, when, as they were marching along in single file, a large number of Indians sprang on them from an ambuscade, and clubbed them to death, only one of their number, a boy, surviving to tell the tale. The last of the Bolivian expeditions was that of 1883. This consisted of nearly two hundred well-armed men, and was accompanied by Dr. Thouar, a French explorer. It marched down more or less parallel to the Pilcomayo, and reached the River Paraguay, after undergoing great privations and a severe battle with eight hundred Indians.

"The later expeditions of the River Pilcomayo have been those of Thouar, of Fontana, of Feilberg, and of Storm. The three latter have been all by steamer, and they have each succeeded in penetrating for a greater or less distance up the river, being eventually brought to a halt by want of water. I shall not dwell on them further, except to say that the last mentioned, that under Mr. Olaf Storm, has been the most fruitful in results. It entered the Pilcomayo on January 1 of 1890, and left it in the autumn of the same year."

The Jesuits, full of daring and zeal, made a valiant attempt to reduce some of the Indian tribes of the Chaco, notably that of Dobrizhoffer and his companions (1749-67). But the first

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Protestant missionary effort in this region was made by Captain Allen Gardiner, R.N., in the year 1845, who was the founder of the South American Missionary Society. His attempt to settle among the Tobas proved futile, and it was not until forty-three years later that the Society succeeded in establishing a Mission among the Chaco Indians, under the leadership of Adolpho Henricksen.

In recent years Ibareta and his party, and Boggiani made explorations, the former on the River Pilcomayo, and the latter in the north of the Chaco, but in both cases they were massacred by the Indians.

APPENDIX II

GEOLOGICAL STRUCTURE, CLIMATE, FAUNA AND FLORA OF THE CHACO

PART I.

EXTRACTS FROM PAPERS READ BEFORE THE SCOTTISH GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY, JANUARY, 1892, BY PROFESSOR J. GRAHAM KERR, M.A., F.R.S , REGIUS PROFESSOR OF ZOOLOGY, GLASGOW UNIVERSITY.

"THE Chaco is the more northern portion of that great estuarine plain whose southern part is so well known to us as the Pampas, and which forms a large portion of the basin of the Rio de la Plata. In its physical features the Chaco agrees in many points with the Pampas; the sharp line of demarcation between them is due rather to their botanical characteristics. The Pampa is open, grassy, and treeless; the Gran Chaco, on the other hand, possesses luxuriant forests. Its surface is almost uniformly level, broken only by almost imperceptible undulations, and with a general slope of from eight to ten inches per mile towards the south-east. The mean height above sea-level of the Chaco Central may be taken as about four hundred and fifty feet. . . . In geological structure the Gran Chaco resembles its southern continuation. Solid rock is but rarely seen, and when it is exposed in the river-bed we find it to consist entirely of the soft, fine-grained tertiary sandstones of the Pampean Age. River sections show a horizontal series of these beds topped by fine flood silt, with occasional layers of sand. The soil is, in the inner part of the Chaco, almost entirely composed of this extremely fine-grained silt, true vegetable mould being almost entirely absent, and it is evidently a product of the periodic inundations which the region undergoes. It is so exceedingly fine-grained as to be almost impermeable to water, except under the action of capillarity.

"Rain-water scarcely sinks through it at all; but, during the periods of intense dessication, capillarity causes a continuous though imperceptible upward progress of moisture to the surface, where it is evaporated, deposits the salts held in solution, and is replaced by a fresh supply from below. In this way the amount of soluble mineral matter in the upper layers of the soil goes on increasing continually, and such is, I believe, the explanation of the saltness of the Chaco soil; and, as if bearing out this view, we find that within the forests, where evaporation is so much less potent, the soil is no longer abnormally salt.

"An interesting phenomenon frequently to be seen in this region is that the surface layer of flood deposit in the dry season exhibits the most perfect division into vertical pentagonal columns. This, again, I attribute to the extremely fine-grained character of the deposit, there being no pebbles or other obstacles to the due working of the physical laws of contraction, which consequently produce the same result as during the gradual cooling and contraction of a stream of basaltic lava.

"The climate of the Gran Chaco is essentially one of great extremes. In the forest-band around its margin these extremes are tempered off to a certain extent; it is in the open central portions that they are most felt. The average rainfall at Formosa in the Central Chaco is fifty-four inches annually. In the more central parts of the Chaco, however, it is probably much less than this, owing to the long-continued seasons of drought. There can scarcely be said to be a true rainy season, for though, as a rule, most of the rainfall is restricted to the summer months—October to March—yet occasionally heavy rains occur at other times of the year. The rainfall over the Gran Chaco generally appears to be subject to a curious cycle, the length of which is approximately ten years, the periods of maxima being marked by universal inundation to a depth of several feet over enormous tracts of country. During these inundations the Chaco rivers may rise to a height of twenty feet above the normal, and continue in high flood in any case for several months, sometimes for over a year. Succeeding this period of rainfall, a period of dessication sets in. The overflow waters contract their limits and become isolated lagoons; these in turn shrink up and give place to marshes, and the intervening country becomes dry and parched, and saturated with salt.

"The mean temperature of the Central Chaco we may take at about 72° F., on either side of which, however, great variation

takes place, so that on a summer's afternoon, with the north wind blowing, the temperature in the shade may frequently go up to 110° F., while in the depth of winter, just at sunrise, it may fall below freezing. The great fall of temperature always experienced in the early hours of the morning is the result of intense radiation taking place from the grass-covered plains towards the clear sky, and, as a natural consequence of this great fall in temperature, the nightly dews in the Chaco are extraordinarily heavy. The prevalent winds are the north and the south. The former is the hot wind; it is comparable with the Sirocco. It parches up all nature, and in animals powerfully affects the nervous system, in some cases even producing insanity. The south wind, which fortunately blows for a greater part of the year than the north, is, on the other hand, cold and refreshing; and it is to its meeting the north wind, and cooling it rapidly, that the rains of the Chaco are due.

"The surface of the Chaco generally is covered with vegetation characterized by its extreme sameness and monotony. This is all the more striking when one compares it with the rich tropical luxuriance of regions in the same latitude to the eastward. One finds, as, in fact, in most extensive open plains, an absence of variety and a marked preponderance of what are called social plants.

"In the typical interior parts of the Chaco far-reaching grassy expanses are varied by patches of forest, or *monte*, composed for the most part of small and scrubby myrtaceous trees.

"The open grass-lands are frequently dotted with innumerable *Carandai* fan palms (*Copernicia cerifera*, Mart.), and then we have one of the most characteristic types of Chaco scenery—that of the *palmar*, or palm-grove. The ground is everywhere covered with a thick growth of grass of four or five feet high, from which arise at intervals the thick and squat stems of the *Carandai* palms. These *palmares* are quite unique in their general effect. In the early morning, when the air is crisp and clear, and not a breath of wind stirs, and the tips of the palm-leaves are bathed in golden sunlight, the scene is one of fairy-like beauty. But in the depth of winter, when the grass has all been consumed by Indian fires, when the sky is covered with leaden clouds, and a biting south-east wind causes the dry and withered palm-leaves to rustle mournfully, then the scene is one of bleak and inhospitable melancholy.

"The Palm Forest covers immense areas throughout the Chaco, and is specially characteristic of the low-lying portions liable to

inundation; and one may always see on the palm-trunks a dark line some three to five feet above the ground, marking the level of flood waters.

"The patches of forest in the interior of the Chaco are not at all of the kind apt to be recalled by the words 'South American Forest,' but are little more than thickets of small and scrubby trees, so interwoven with lianas and other climbing plants, and mingled with spiny *Bromeliaceæ* and cacti, as to be quite impassable by man or beast.

"One does find an occasional large forest tree, but these are comparatively few in number. In the little *montes* one finds the *Guayacan* (*Cæsalpinia melanocarpa*, Gr.), the *Quebracho colorado* (*Quebrachia Lorentzii*, Gr.), and the *Palo cruz* (*Tabebuia nodosa*, Gr.), all fine timber trees; while in the open one encounters several species of the genus *Prosopis*—the *Vinal* (*Prosopis ruscifolia*, Gr.), the *Algaroba* (*P. juliflora*), and the *Nandubey* (*P. nandubey*, Lor.) Of these, the *Algaroba* bears a long, locust-like pod containing a large quantity of sugar, and which forms an exceedingly nourishing and staying article of food. The Indians pound the pods up, and mix them into a kind of paste with the fruit of the *Mistól* (*Zizyphus mistól*, Gr.), so as to form a very palatable kind of cake.

"Other important trees occurring in the central parts of the Chaco are the *Palo santo*, or holywood (*Guayacum officinale*), so well known both as a timber and as a drug, and the *Cascarandá*, of which the heartwood forms a timber of extraordinary density, hardness, and tenacity.

"I shall not detain you by mentioning any of the smaller plants of the Chaco, with the exception of two. The first of these—the *Uvirá* of the Paraguayans—is a Bromeliaceous plant with long narrow leaves, which, with a minimum of trouble, yield a fibre of great tenacity, especially valuable for its power of resisting the effects of moisture. At present its fibres are greatly used by the Indians, who make from it a coarse cloth for their garments, as well as twine and rope; but it yet remains to be exploited by European capitalists, when it will no doubt give rise to an important industry. The other plant is the *Caraguatá ii*, another *Bromelia*, which, although of little value in itself, becomes an inestimable boon to the explorers of the salt-saturated region it inhabits, for the hollow axils of its leaves store up the dew and other moisture, and preserve it cold and clear, as if for the special benefit of the traveller.

"I have said that the vegetation of the Chaco is poor and mono-

tonous on the whole, but I must qualify this statement by mentioning that on the borders, where the climate is more equable and the country better drained, we find a band of luxuriant vegetation. Towards the western border this takes the form of a continuous strip of absolutely impenetrable forest; on the eastern, of rich woodland, interspersed with luxuriant pasture. It is this peripheral zone, and narrow prolongations of it along the banks of the fresh-water streams, that I believe to be the only parts of the Chaco destined to become of great economical value.

"Animal life in the Chaco is varied and characteristic. The marshy regions are the haunt of the tapir (*Tapirus Americanus*), the great marsh deer (*Cariacus paludosus*), the *Carpincho* or *Capibará* (*Hydrochærus cabybara*), the *Coypu* (*Myopotamus coypus*), and a large otter (*Lutra paranensis*). By the forest margin one encounters large troops of peccaries (*Dicotyles labiatus* and *D. torquatus*), an occasional great ant-eater (*Myrmecophaga jubata*), and numerous armadilloes; while here and there one comes across one of the large carnivora, such as the jaguar (*Felis onça*), the puma (*F. concolor*), or the *Aguará guazú*, or maned wolf (*Canis jubatus*). Bird-life is abundant and varied, flocks of shrill-voiced parrots fly hither and thither, woodpeckers of all sizes and varieties are heard busily at work, and by the margin of a lonely lagoon one may see the great jabiru (*Mycteria Americana*) standing motionless on one leg, as if buried in contemplation of the silence around him.

"It is perhaps at night that the explorer becomes most impressed with the presence of animal life in the Chaco. If it is summer-time the whole air is filled with the sounds of insect life—high above everything else rises the metallic hum of the mosquito and the chirp of innumerable crickets; while this is broken in upon every now and then by the heavy hum of a large beetle or the shrill railway-whistle of the *Cicada*. In winter-time, however, the nights are excessively cold, the insect world is still, and there reigns over all Nature a silence deep almost to oppressiveness, broken only at intervals by the cry of the *Nacurutú owl* (*Bubo virginianus*), or the loud roar of the *Aguará gauzú*, or the fearful and blood-curdling screams of the *Paca-á* (*Aramides ypecaha*). The intense wildness and eeriness of these night-sounds of the Chaco must be heard to be appreciated; but the wildest and most eerie of them all is the voice of its human inhabitants, when heard chanting at dead of night a war-song, or a wild lament for their dead, or a night-long incantation, to drive away the evil spirits from their sick ones."

APPENDIX II

PART II.

EXTRACTS FROM "A ZOOLOGICAL EXPEDITION TO SOUTH AMERICA," BY W. E. AGAR, M.A., D.Sc., FELLOW OF KING'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.[1]

"Of all the regions into which the world is divided by zoologists in accordance with their faunas, by far the most interesting is that comprising South America. The sportsman in search of big game goes to Africa, where he meets enormous herds of that perhaps most highly specialized and successful of all the orders of mammalia, the ungulates or hoofed animals, and is able to take his part in the extermination of the antelopes, giraffes, rhinoceroses, zebras, hippotamus, and elephants. These forms, however, so characteristic of the African continent, for the very reason that they belong to a highly specialized group, are of no special interest to the zoologist. If we turn to South America we find a very different state of things. Instead of great herds of ungulates, we find there only four families of them represented. The pigs are represented by the peccary, the cervidæ by a few species of deer, the camels by the llama, and finally there is the tapir; while the beasts which we may call *characteristic* of the country are such forms as the opossum, armadillo, ant-eater, and sloth, all very lowly organized mammals.

"Our interest in the South American fauna is deepened, and becomes a more intelligent one when we examine its history in past geological ages.

"The past history of the mammals shows us that, broadly speaking, most new forms arose in the North Polar regions (which we know were much warmer then than now) and spread thence southwards, exterminating to a large extent the more primitive earlier forms, and being sometimes ousted in their turn by new forms migrating southwards. Now the primitive mammals which arose in the Northern Hemisphere seem to have reached South America, not across the Isthmus of Panama, for we know that the whole south portion of North America was submerged at this period, but probably by means of a land connection across the Atlantic with Africa. Whatever may have been the exact nature of this connection between South America and the other land masses of the globe towards the end of the secondary geological epoch, it is certain that it was soon broken through, and that South America

[1] Read before the Royal Philosophical Society of Glasgow, January 13, 1909.

was completely isolated during the whole of that period in which the most active evolution of mammalia was taking place in other parts of the world. The few low mammals which had got into South America before it became isolated evolved a very peculiar mammalian fauna, including such forms as the giant sloth, or *Megatherium*, and glyptodonts like gigantic armadillos, which, however, never reached a very high grade of development, such as the mammals in the more desperate struggle for existence that was going on in other parts of the world were attaining.

"During the end of the Miocene period the emergence of the Isthmus of Panama allowed the influx of the more highly specialized forms from the Northern Hemisphere, and completely changed the character of the South American fauna. In fossiliferous beds after this, though they had been conspicuously absent before, we find lions, the sabre-toothed tiger, dogs, bears, llama, deer, horses, tapirs, and peccaries appearing now for the first time in South America, though they had been abundant in other parts of the globe for ages before. These new forms established themselves to a great extent at the expense of the old typical South American fauna. Remains of this original fauna, however, still survive in the opossum, armadillo, ant-eater, and sloths, while the new forms, which are now far more abundant, both in numbers and species, include such forms as the deer, tapir, peccary, puma, jaguar, wild-cats, dogs, etc.

"The mammals are not the only animals which are represented in South America by lowly forms. . . . In ancient geological ages a group of fishes called the Dipnoi were the dominant group. They have left their fossil remains all over the world. At the present day, as has happened in so many cases with formerly important and cosmopolitan groups of mammals, they now survive only in the three most southern of the mainland masses of the world. I refer to the lung-fishes, of which one survives in Queensland, one in Africa, and the third in South America. The South American lung-fish, *Lepidosiren*, besides its interest from its position in the animal kingdom, forming, as it does, a sort of connecting link between fishes and terrestrial vertebrates, happens to afford probably the most favourable material of all vertebrates for determining certain problems of the microscopical structure of living animals. . . .

"It must not be supposed, however, that the presence of these primitive forms is the only attraction this continent has to offer

to the naturalist. Probably nowhere in the world is there such a profusion of strange and beautiful birds and insects.

"My goal was one of the stations of the South American Missionary Society, very near where Professor Graham Kerr obtained the material for his well-known work on the embryology of *Lepidosiren*. . . .

". . . The modern remnants of the original South American mammalian fauna which flourished unchallenged before the immigration of the more pushful ungulates and carnivora which now form the more conspicuous part of the mammalian fauna, are here in the forest, but they are all retiring creatures, and need looking for. Naturally, however, it is they that interest the zoologist chiefly. Indeed, collections of embryological material of certain forms of them have never before been obtained. The little mouse opossum (*Didelphys pusilla*), one of the marsupials, is one of these animals. It is a nocturnal creature, a size larger than a mouse, with enormous black eyes, fan-like ears, and long prehensile tail. It lives squirrel-like among the trees.

"Then the armadillos, relations of the gigantic extinct megatherium and Glyptodonts, live among the undergrowth in these forests. They are abundant both in numbers and species, but very difficult to see. The Indians catch them alive by following up their tracks into their burrows. I was able to collect a fair number of specimens belonging to three different genera.

"The other members of the ancient fauna which linger on in the forests of the Paraguayan Chaco are the ant-eaters. These are rarely met with, and rewards, huge in their eyes, were offered to the Indians for specimens. Our efforts resulted in the capture of two specimens of *Myrmecophaga*, the great ant-eater. Surely no living mammal presents such a weird appearance as does this beast. It is a large animal, fully seven feet long, counting the long tail, which is carried horizontally and covered with a long thick mane, having the effect of making the animal appear much larger than it really is. The snout is enormously prolonged, ending in a very small mouth through which the long tongue can be protruded. The claws of the front legs are very long and strong, and the legs themselves provided with huge muscles, for the purpose of tearing open the ant-hills. Moreover, the beast is strongly bandy-legged, so that it shuffles along on the sides of its fore-paws, the palms of the hands turned inwards. In consequence of this the animal is only capable of a very clumsy, shuffling gait, and could have no hope of escaping

an enemy by flight. The herculean front legs, with their terrible claws, however, are all that are required as defensive weapons, and with these it can rip open a dog before it has a chance to get its teeth through its bristly hair and tough skin. It is even said, though I do not know on what evidence, that it is a match for the jaguar. . . .

". . . In spite of the vast areas of land completely submerged in the rainy season, one never gets the sight of a sheet of water. In the dry season the swamps are mere plains covered with short grass. Directly the rains come and the water begins to stand about, the weeds spring up with astonishing quickness, and where three months ago there was short, parched-up grass, in the deeper parts of the swamp there will now be perhaps four feet of water and a growth of grasses and papyrus matted together with convolvulus and other creeping plants, far higher than a man's head, and so dense that one has difficulty in fighting one's way through it.

"These swamps are the homes of millions of wild fowl. There are flocks of ducks of various species in such countless numbers that the noise of them striking their wings on the water as they rise into the air often deceives the new-comer into thinking he hears a distant roll of thunder. Storks and herons are there in plenty, the great chajá (*Palamedea*), with its piercing scream, and the jacana, a bird not unlike a very small moor-hen, of a bright chestnut colour with lemon-coloured underwings. It has very long toes, which enable it to run over the surface of the floating weeds without sinking in. They go about in small flocks, and have a beautiful habit of suddenly raising their wings so as to expose the yellow undersurface for a few seconds. Ibises are there in great numbers too, and many other peculiar birds, some of great size, rise up before one with great flapping of wings as one pushes one's way laboriously through the tall weeds

"Of all the denizens of the swamps, the most interesting to the naturalist is, of course, the lungfish, or *Lepidosiren*. Although specimens of these have always been great rarities in museums, at any rate prior to Professor Kerr's expedition, they are extremely abundant in the Chaco swamps—in fact, they form a very important part of the natives' food supply.

"During the wet season, when the swamps are full, the lungfish lives like a fish in the water—unlike an ordinary fish, however, in that it has to rise to the surface to breathe now and then, for its gills are reduced and incapable of extracting sufficient oxygen out

of the water. In compensation for this, it possesses, as its name implies, a pair of typical lungs, by means of which it can breathe air. During this period the fish are captured by the Indians by spearing.

"The thick weeds and reddish colour of the water make it quite impossible to see the fish, but they often betray themselves by causing a quiver in the reeds as they swim past, showing the hunter where to strike. A full-grown female is over three feet long, and as it is pretty thick too, it presents a fair-sized target. More often they spear the male as it lies in its nest guarding its young.

"When the swamps dry up, the lungfish makes a burrow for itself in the soft mud, and lies in it with its tail curled up over its head. The burrow communicates with the air by a narrow opening. At first the fish lies close beneath the surface, but as the upper layers of mud dry up, it deepens its burrow, so that it is always found in a stratum of fairly moist mud.

"In this burrow the fish has to lie till the swamps are again filled next rainy season. As this season is in some years missed out, it has to be prepared to last at least eighteen months without food. It makes ready for this fast by eating much more than it requires during the wet season, and storing up the surplus as fat, especially in the tail. During the dry season this fat is slowly re-absorbed. The chief food of the lungfish is a water-snail, *Ampullaria*.

"It was curious to think, as one walked over the parched plains which represent the swamps in the dry season, that a few feet below that baked-up surface were thousands of living fish. And the lungfish is not the only possessor of this interesting habit, but a kind of eel, *Symbranchus*, passes the dry season in much the same way, and I saw some Indians who were engaged in digging a well bring out several live specimens from some feet below the surface.

"During the dry season the Indians dig the lungfish out of the ground with sharp wooden stakes, the little breathing hole at the top of the burrow betraying it at once.

"Most of my efforts were directed towards finding nests of the lungfish, as the material required consisted mainly of breeding males and developing eggs. The nest of the *Lepidosiren* consists of a tunnel slanting obliquely downwards in the mud at the bottom of the swamp, and roughly lined with fragments of water-weeds. After she has laid her eggs the female swims away and takes no more thought for the future of her progeny. Not so the male,

however. The eggs are placed at the end of the burrow, and the male lies in the passage leading to it, ready to defend his home with his powerful teeth—as I proved unintentionally on my own person by putting my hand into a burrow from which I thought the male had been driven out.

"The devotion of the male lungfish is truly admirable, for he stays in the nest the whole time, from the moment the eggs are laid till the young are ready to leave the nest, a period of about seven weeks. . . .

". . . Curiously enough, there is another fish in these swamps which has very similar nesting habits to the lungfish. I refer to the eel, mentioned before as being able to pass the dry season in the mud like *Lepidosiren*. In this species the nests are also burrows in the mud, though not lined with water-weeds, and the male keeps guard over the developing eggs.

"The two classes of animals which force themselves most upon the notice of a new-comer in the Chaco, be he naturalist or no, have not yet been referred to. These are the frogs and the insects. At home the common frog and toad exhaust the species of this class of animal with which one is likely to meet, and one thinks of them as retiring animals, and not often seen and seldom heard. On a wet night in the Chaco the noise made by the frogs is deafening. There are about four-and-twenty species of them, and each one seems to have a distinctive cry of its own. Some of them have curious breeding habits. One species lays its eggs immediately after a shower of rain in quite temporary pools. These eggs go through their development very quickly, hatching within twenty-four hours after they are laid. Some of the climbing tree-frogs are very handsome, and make most interesting nests, suspended from bushes overhanging pools. In one case (*Phyllomedusa sauvagii*), when the frog is about to lay its eggs, it crawls out on to a suitable branch, and pulling a number of leaves together, proceeds to cement them in this position by means of a plug of jelly, formed by a mass of gelatinous egg-cases which are laid without any eggs in them. The plug so made forms the floor of the nest, the leaves to which it is stuck the sides ; the eggs are then laid into the chamber so formed, and finally another jelly plug is added as a roof to the whole structure. If such a nest is opened at the right time, it is found to be full of a seething mass of little tadpoles, wriggling about in a sort of soup formed by the liquefaction of the gelatinous egg-cases, the whole held in position by the plug at the bottom. This plug

gradually softens under the influence of the fluid above it, and if a nest in this condition is watched, one presently sees a thick viscid drop forming, and soon this falls off into the water of the pool beneath, perhaps carrying with it a tadpole. Soon another drop forms, then they come more quickly, and now the whole semi-fluid contents of the nest are falling in a steady drip into the water, each drop carrying with it a number of wriggling tadpoles. In one nest in which I watched the whole process from start to finish, over three hundred tadpoles fell out of the nest into the water beneath in forty-five minutes.

"Of the insects, the locusts, ants, and mosquitos are perhaps the most striking. A swarm of locusts is a marvellous sight. At first one sees apparently a long dark cloud of a peculiar reddish colour appearing above the horizon, and if it is one's first experience, one thinks one is in for a storm. However, in an hour or so the cloud is overhead, and has resolved itself into countless millions of locusts, so that the sky is darkened with them, and the air full of the whirring of their wings. They settle on the trees, and in a few hours entirely strip them of leaves.

"There are many different species of ant, the most remarkable, perhaps, being the saüba, or leaf-cutting ant. As one goes through the forest one will frequently come across what looks like a column of small leaves on the march. Closer examination shows that this appearance is caused by two columns of ants hurrying along a well-beaten track. Every ant going in the one direction is carrying upright in its jaws a circular piece of leaf about as large as a sixpence, while all the ants going in the other direction are empty-handed. If we follow up this path in the direction in which the empty-handed ants are going, we come at last—though not for seventy or eighty yards—to a tree at which it stops. At the foot of the tree one sees a thick pile of little circular pieces of leaf such as the ants are carrying, and it is evident that they are going backwards and forwards from the nest bearing off these leafy discs. Up in the tree one sees other ants of the same species busy cutting out new pieces of leaf, which fall in quite a continuous shower to the ground beneath. If we follow up the ants' path in the other direction, we see it leads into a great, low mound, the largest being thirty or forty yards in circumference and two feet high. This immense mound is formed entirely by minute granules of earth brought up from the enormous system of underground passages of the ant. Numerous other paths lead into it, the main roads

branching out in all directions, each branch ending at last at the foot of a tree. All the paths are trodden quite hard and smooth by the millions of little feet, and they look like cart-wheel tracks.

"It is now known that the saüba ant takes the fragments of leaves which it collects in this way into its subterranean nest, and uses them to grow a fungus on, which provides food for the ant.

"This ant seems to work by night as well as by day—at least, I have seen them by the light of a lantern several hours after sunset just as busy as during the daytime.

"The other insects mentioned, the mosquitos, are quite indescribable. They are, indeed, the most important of all the circumstances which condition one's daily life in the Chaco. If the mosquitos are quiet, life is enjoyable; if they are bad, it is not worth living after sunset. Their numbers and vindictiveness are almost incredible. Personal experience is necessary to convince one how easily they can and do get through a flannel coat and shirt. If one goes out anywhere after dark, or in swampy places even in the daytime, one's shoulders are riddled with their bites, and the same with every part of the body where one's clothes touch; and as to one's hands and face, who can describe the misery of it? Horses suffer terribly too, and at the end of the summer there is scarcely one in ten fit to be ridden. If, when travelling at night, one seeks to encourage one's dejected horse with a pat on the neck, one finds one's hand covered with blood squashed out of the bodies of gorged mosquitos packed almost as closely as there is room for them."

APPENDIX III

LANGUAGE

"LENGUA" is probably a Guarani nickname given to the Indians, who were known as "Mascoy" in the eighteenth century, and should be properly termed "Lengua-Mascoy," or "Lengua-Machicuy" The tribes known as Lengua, Angaite, Mascoy, Sanapana, Guana, according to Dr. Lafone-Quevedo, the great authority on Chaco languages, belong to the Machicuy stock, being a branch of the great Nu-Arwak group, which is widely spread over the centre of South America, extending from Paraguay to the West Indies, where they are found mixed up with the Caribbic stock. Señor Guido Boggiani, in his monograph on the Paiyagua and Machicuy Indians, include the Towothli and Suhin tribes with the Lengua, but I think these will be found to belong to the Guaicurú stock.

Lengua is not used by the Indians to describe themselves, but they call themselves by various clan terms: Kyoinawatsam (people of the river), Kyoinathla (people of the palm-tree), Kyoinithma (people of the forest), Paisiapto (black-food), etc.

The two most important facts of the language are: (*a*) That the pronominal inflections are *prefixed* to the noun or verb, and (*b*) that they are multiform in inflection—*e.g.*:

e-mik	= my hand.
ne-thlit	= my waist.
ah-aktik	= my eye.
sik-tahanama	= my bed.
sel-nakta	= my goods.
sey-ispo	= my cigar.

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ik-thlingkyi	= I go.
e-wanchi	= I am able.
el-anaiyi	= I make.
ey-apaschi	= I send.

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The verbs are inflected for modification by affixes—*e.g.* :

yintim-kyi	= to take, lead, as horse or child.
yintim-akthleyi	= to take there, or again.
yintim-anteyi	= to lead here.
yintim-akme	= to lead in this direction for first time.
yintim-aha	= to lead about from place to place.
yinto-waiyi	= to lead from . . . to this place.
yinto-wukme	= to lead to a distant place.
Etc.	

A very important grammatical distinction exists, not coincident with sex. It is difficult to trace a logical reason for this division of words : Sun is feminine ; moon, masculine ; the generic words for animal, bird, fish, serpent, tree, are feminine ; yet some of the specific names are masculine—*e.g.*, the ciervo is feminine, the Brazilian brocket and all other deer are masculine.

Coming to sex, one finds, what is common to the family group, a special language for the women. To address or speak of a woman different prefixes (and in some cases distinct words) have to be used—*e.g.* :

kato ikto = eat thy food (addressing a woman).
ito apto = eat thy food (addressing a man).

Relationship is traced on the female side ; and terms "uncle," "aunt," "niece," etc., are very distinct—*e.g.* :

apai = my mother's brother.
eha = my father's brother.

Sentences are very simple. The verb precedes the noun, whether subject or object. With neuter verbs the subject is expressed, with active verbs the object ; and sometimes the subject is expressed when there is a necessity.

To make quite certain of a sentence, *e.g.*, "The tiger killed the man," it is necessary to say, "The man is killed [neuter verb] ; the tiger's killing" (Abmatneyi enthlit, niptana apkyakhe). In an ordinary narrative the tiger will have formed the subject, and the simple statement, "(He) killed the man," would be sufficiently clear.

Verbs are inflected to denote present, past, and future tenses. The present tense refers to temporary action, while the past tense indicates that which is permanent, habitual, or customary.

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An interesting inflection, denoting a kind of "middle" voice, exists, which expresses an action done to or for another—*e.g.*:

Iglikyik apawa = I take off my own blanket.
Iglikkischik apawa = I take off his blanket.

The language abounds in interjections, and one has to be an adept at animals' cries to express fully a hunting story.

Some interesting idioms might be cited: The word to "kill" expresses also overcome, bothered, or tormented with, etc.:

tiyin-inkyakhak = sleepy, killed with sleep.
etin-inkyakhak = tormented with smoke
yiam-apkyakhak = perished with south wind, cold.
maik-inkyakhak = killed with hunger, hungry.
him-inkyakhak = killed with sun, thirsty.

The verbs "hear" and "see" have some interesting uses:

malñaak ikpanma = I didn't hear the odour—*i.e.*, I did not smell.
iglingangko ikmasche = I heard the pain—*i.e.*, I felt.
igwitak ningmasche = I saw the sickness—*i.e.*, I was sick.
kotak etkya = she saw no child—*i.e.*, barren.

The "wathwuk," or inside, is the seat of emotion:

kilkyitamkyi abwathwuk = to round up the inside—*i.e.*, to think.
paihekthleyi abwathlwuk = the inside spread out—*i.e.*, pleasure.
tiyikme abwathwuk = the inside falls—*i.e.*, grief.
liowu abwathwuk = the inside loosens—*i.e.*, love, trust.

The "inkyinyik," or chest, seems to be the individuality:

lokyik inkyinyik = angry chest = to recall, return for.
thlingaikha inkyinyik = moving chest = intense agony.
gaihek inkyinyik = hard chest = to live, be courageous.
kyitsipkyik inkyinyik = dead chest = to love, covet, desire.

The people are very conservative, and prefer to coin new names rather than introduce a foreign word. Some words from the Spanish and Guarani, however, have crept in—*e.g.*, "waitkya" and "lawa," from Spanish "vaca," "clavo"; "káá" is the Guarani

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"cáá." The augmentative particles "yam" and "yat" are prefixed to nouns to form new words—*e.g.*:

paat	= grass.	yampaat	= sugar-cane.
nipkyesik	= sheep.	yatnipkyesik	= goat

Ho = like, is frequently used in the same manner:

athlawa = a palm-leaf. ho-athlawa = an accordian.

The language is rich touching their own life, and especially verbs of movement—coming and going—as: to go away, to go for first time, to go in a given direction, to go for a purpose, to go part of the way, to go back, to go quickly, to go home, to go to examine, etc. Some verbs are peculiar to the language—*e.g.*, mangkathneyi = to go and ask food for a friend, to beg for another; mangkangwaktamo = to arrive just in time. Another verb expresses the idea of a man following in the wake of a camp fire to pick up any salvage; another verb expresses the idea of a warning—*e.g.*, a hen in a fit suggests the idea that, unless you kill the hen, you will die.

In general style the language is vivid, comprising sharp, short, terse sentences. The speaker's voice rises and falls in rhythmic cadence, words and sentences are carefully chosen in narrating, and, for euphony, words are contracted and accents changed so as to give to the whole a pleasant rhythmic sound. Nearly ten thousand words are collected in the dictionary, which includes the modifications of the root verbs and augmentative forms of nouns.

APPENDIX IV

OUTSIDE TESTIMONY

THE following are extracts from unsolicited letters sent to the Buenos Ayres *Standard* and to the Secretary of the South American Missionary Society by a few who have visited the Paraguayan Chaco Mission :

"*To the Editor of the Buenos Ayres 'Standard.'*

"*June* 5, 1892.

"SIR,—Having to spend a few days in Villa Concepcion waiting for the next steamer, we decided to employ our time in visiting the station of the South American Missionary Society, in the Paraguayan Chaco. The station is little known, I believe, and only very few white people have ever visited it. It might therefore be of some interest to your readers to hear something about what we saw and heard there.

"Thlagnasinkinmith, the Indian name of the station, lies about twelve leagues to the west of the River Paraguay, in the interior of the Chaco and on the Rio Verde. Of recent creation, the place has rapidly developed under the able and energetic management of Mr. W. Grubb, and it is already widely known amongst the Chaco Indians, who consider it one of their largest settlements. . . .

". . . We found Mr. Grubb quite alone with his Indians, who appeared rather disagreeably surprised at first, for they always fear the intrusion of white people into their domains. However, when they saw that Mr. Grubb received us in a most friendly manner, they at once concluded that we were the new missionaries who are expected from England, and received us with expressions of friendship. Quite a village is rising round the station house. Mr. Grubb informed us that as many as six to seven hundred Indians come to

stay there sometimes, until he has to send them away, so as to make room for others to come. . . .

"By encouraging these settlements, and showing the Indians how to go to work, the immense deserts of the Chaco will be studded little by little by Indian villages, and to my mind Mr. Grubb's efforts will go much further to open and civilize the Chaco than European colonization, as it has been undertaken until now. They are beginning to enter into Mr. Grubb's ideas, and Thlagnasinkinmith is already considered by them as national property. . .

". . . I may add the hope that the Anglo-Paraguayan Land Company will do more to assist the courageous efforts of Mr. Grubb's Mission, and that he may also find support for his work from other quarters. Thus he will be enabled to become in reality the 'Pacificador del Chaco,' a title which was given to him with much foresight by the Paraguayan Government.

"I am, sir,

"ARNOLD H. SCHOCH,

"*Belgian Consul at Asuncion, Paraguay.*"

"*To His Excellency the President of the Republic, Asuncion.*

"VILLA CONCEPCION,

"*December* 30, 1893.

"Knowing the interest your Excellency takes in the welfare and advancement of the Chaco, I venture to inform you that I have this day returned from an expedition to its interior to survey and measure the boundaries for a Mission station of the South American Missionary Society, from which, in future, its missionaries will work for the civilization and *evangelisation* of the Chaco Indians; and am surprised at the security and tranquillity with which we can now travel among them, thanks to the effective measures taken by the missionaries of the South American Missionary Society to *Christianise* those savages. . . . To-day the spirit of hostility *has entirely disappeared.* I have made my present survey with Indian assistance, and have not carried a single firearm. At night we slept tranquilly, at whatever spot our labour for the day had ceased, no watch being set, and several times in the vicinity of strange Indians whom we met on the road. We sought the villages instead of avoiding them as formerly. . . .

"I remain, your Excellency's obedient servant,

(*Signed*) "PEDRO A. FREUND,

"*Public Land Surveyor.*"

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"*To the Secretary of the South American Mission.*

"ASUNCION, PARAGUAY,
"*November* 27, 1894.

"I had occasion to come to Paraguay on business, and being desirous of seeing something of the interior of the Chaco, I gladly accepted the invitation of the missionaries sent out by the South American Mission to accompany them to the interior. Let me bear testimony to the work these young fellows are doing. For nine months of the year the interior of the Chaco is one vast swamp, as far as it is known at present. During a two hundred mile ride, including the return journey, over a track chosen by the Indians as being the highest and driest, I can safely say that one hundred and eighty miles lay through water, and this in the middle of November, with the sun almost vertical. Mr. Grubb has been an equal distance farther west from the point I reached, and found no variation in the camps. Through these tropical swamps your missionaries plod steadily on, leading such a life as I have only seen equalled by that of the hardiest pioneers, one moment scorched by the tropical sun, the next drenched to the skin by torrential rains, sleeping where nightfall finds them, at the edge of a swamp, and often in soaking wet clothes. They should have waterproof sleeping-bags in which to shelter themselves from the rain, which here comes down like a waterspout. Even a cowboy in North America is better protected from the elements than they. Perpetual journeys to and from the interior, with the coast of the Paraguay River as a base, must be undertaken, to keep the missionary staff in the bare necessaries of life, and only very small loads can be taken. Yet I find these men driving bullock-teams themselves, walking beside the team up to their waists in water, and working as no colonial bullock-driver would work for one pound per day. At the end of a journey, which usually lasts a week, the only shelter awaiting these men is a rough palm-log house with one small room and a veranda—nothing more—and this room serves as store and affords all the privacy available.

"Last, but not least, may I point out the never-ceasing plague of insect life? The tropical swamps breed these pests in opaque clouds. Mosquitos and gadflies of many varieties, one kind of gadfly being at least an inch long, also ticks, and a small fly about the size of a grain of dust, with a venom which is in the inverse

ratio of its size. On the dry land is found the homely insect called the 'jigger,' which seeks a congenial resting-place in your feet, and more particularly under the nail of your big toe.

"The Indians themselves are undoubtedly a fine race. But, decked everywhere with feathers, painted on the face and breast, their ears distorted with blocks of wood over an inch in diameter, forced through the lobe of the ear until only a thin piece of skin surrounds the wood, wearing necklaces of teeth or beads, together with a dark copper-coloured, almost naked body, they make a picture which represents the typical savage. These Indians were held in terror by the Paraguayans until the advent of your missionaries, and to this day the Paraguayans will not venture more than a few miles into the Chaco. Yet both Mr. Pride and Mr. Grubb have lived a year at a time alone among the Indians without a spell, cut off from all communication with the outside world, except for the arrival of the periodical bullock-dray. But it is invidious to mention names where all are imbued with the same enthusiasm. I may say that I have seen Missions in many parts of the world, including those to the North American Indians and that of the Danes to the Esquimaux on the west coast of Greenland, which I may take as fair samples of rough work; yet I do not hesitate to say that as a record of hard, patient, rough, enduring work, this Mission to the Chaco Indians has only been equalled by that of the Jesuit Fathers when they made their noble effort to Christianise Paraguay. It must, however, be remembered that even the Jesuits tried to evangelise the Chaco, but gave it up, as the obstacles were so enormous.

"Of the religious part of the work I say nothing, because I am not qualified to judge; but a religion which produces such men and such self-denying work deserves to be crowned with success, and I heartily hope the Mission may succeed.

"This testimony from a man avowedly out of all sympathy with proselytizing effort may provide your supporters with some information as to the *real nature of the work undertaken by your missionaries here, which appears to be little known,* the more especially as they, like the plucky young fellows they are, *seem to have concealed the real hardships they endure.*

"LIVINGSTONE LEARMONTH."

APPENDIX IV

Extract from Bishop Every's First Report.

"In conclusion, I may say that I have been greatly cheered and pleased by my visit to the Chaco Mission. Coming with a perfectly open mind and by no means predisposed to take a bright view of the work, after careful observation and questioning I have been convinced, alike by all that I have seen and heard, that a very real work for God has been done, that there are no serious defects, and that there are many signs, such as the changing of native customs and leavening of native opinion in the vicinity of the Mission, which point to a prosperous development in the future.

"E. F., Falkland Isles.

"*November* 10, 1902."

Testimony from a Tourist. To the Secretary of the South American Missionary Society.

"The outside world cannot know what a herculean effort it must have been to establish this Mission, and what a colossal business it is to keep it up. The missionaries have gathered around them a village consisting of some two hundred Indians. This does not seem big, but you must realize that the Indians' life is hunting, and therefore they cannot live in large communities, and, in fact, twenty to thirty is a large village. Before I arrived in South America I knew no one connected with the Mission, and, having nothing to do with missionary work, my criticism is absolutely that of an outsider. They really do seem to be building up and educating the Indian on such excellent lines that I firmly believe it will prove of a permanent character, and eventually become a self-governing body. When one thinks that but ten years ago it was dangerous to one's life to venture into the Chaco, whilst now there are numerous *estancias* on the border, and one can now go for a hundred and more miles into the interior with comparative safety, it shows that the missionaries have got the 'thin edge of the wedge' well thrust in.

"I wish that this could be brought more before the public. These men and women are working amongst the greatest hardships; I believe they all suffer from fever; the very water they drink is swamp-water; the houses they live in are but log huts made of palm-trees. They are making savages into reasonable,

peace-abiding people, and, what touches the commercial world more, they are making what was once considered a piece of waste land, the size of England and Scotland, of real commercial value. Landowners in the Paraguayan Chaco owe all to this English Mission, and especially to Mr. W. B. Grubb, the pioneer and backbone of the whole undertaking.

"J. F. J. WEISS.

"*November*, 1908."

Testimony from a Chaco Landowner. To the Secretary of the South American Missionary Society.

"In spite of many reverses, and notwithstanding the difficulties that beset him, Mr. Grubb successfully realized his undertaking. Working from his base at the Riacho Negro opposite the town of Villa Concepcion, he established three inland stores, where the Chaco tribes were able to obtain clothing and other requirements in exchange for their produce. By this and other means the Lengua Indians have been reclaimed from their nomadic life, and many of them are now engaged in pastoral and industrial pursuits. This work still proceeds, and under the spiritual and educational guidance of the Mission a young generation is springing up on a field where they are enabled to lead a self-supporting and domesticated life. . . .

". . . I wish to avail myself of this letter to express my testimony to the work of Mr. Grubb and his fellow-labourers in the Paraguayan Chaco. They have had to undergo hardships and to face obstacles and discouragement such as probably no material gain would have inspired men to encounter and surmount. My intimate connection with Mr. Grubb during the past four years, dealing at times with matters which we were called upon to discuss from opposed standpoints, has produced in me the most unalterable esteem and respect for him.

"I remain, dear sir,

"Yours faithfully,

"HERBERT GIBSON.

September, 1909.'

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